

THE  
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**BLINDS DOWN:**

*A CHRONICLE OF CHARMINSTER.*<sup>1</sup>

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**CHAPTER IX.**

**ROSETTA RETURNS.**

CHARMINSTER was mildly fluttered when it became known that the widow of the author of 'Mists' was staying at the 'Bell.' She was seen walking about the town, accompanied by a Yorkshire tyke, who took no notice whatever of other dogs. Mrs. Newman drew in water-colour, and made several sketches in the watermeadows which bordered the Char. She was tall and thin, and her hair was as white as Miss Mauleverer's. Mrs. Hooton remarked that she dressed very plainly, but with distinction. The vicar and Mrs. Easter called upon her at once. The vicar's wife added that it was pleasant and gratifying to hear Mrs. Newman speak of her late husband and his work. Evidently they had been a most devoted couple, hardly ever separated. Literary people were rather queer. Poor George Eliot, for instance, who had 'debased the moral coinage of the realm!' What an illuminating phrase that! Whose was it? Oh, yes, it would be quite the right thing to call, but Mrs. Newman had intimated with no uncertain voice that she had come to Charminster to rest. One could not call her shy, but she was unquestionably reserved, with the air of one who had loved and lost 'far from the madding crowd.'

The vicar lent her some books. When they were alone Rosetta asked:

'Would you recognise me, Mr. Easter?'

He replied truthfully, 'No.'

She had changed very greatly. The brilliance was gone from

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her brown eyes, and the colour from her cheeks. The rounded contours of youth had vanished with them, leaving in their place noble austerities of line. The parson perceived that she must have suffered much, and she told him simply that this was the case. Her husband had been long subject to periodic attacks of pain, so bad that it had seemed as if the tiger was mauling him again. Rosetta concluded:

'The marks of his claws are on my face. I have no fear of being recognised. I shall meet my old friend, Laura Hooton, without a qualm.'

The vicar bowed.

'I have seen Derek Devenish. I could hardly wait till the Bank opened its doors; I was in Charminster High Street before nine yesterday morning, walking up and down, staring at every young man I met. I recognised him at once.'

'He is very handsome.'

'I care nothing for that. I can see that he is strong and honest. Quality shines out of his eyes.'

'If you will lunch with us I can arrange that Derek should meet you.'

'You never told your wife?'

'No.'

'Wonderful man!'

It struck him that her soft voice might betray her, but she laughed, shaking her head.

'I used to speak too loudly. You can guess why. The carefully modulated tones of my sisters, their slow utterance, used to affect me with a defiant desire to shout. The shock to my husband's nerves, from which he never recovered, compelled me to alter the pitch and tone of my voice.'

'Everything you tell me interests me so much.'

She explained the change of name, the significant choice of 'Newman' and 'Paul,' and she described the interview with Rose, at Bognor, long ago.

'It was a hard moment.'

'I can believe it.'

'I didn't kiss her. I didn't dare. All the time I was quaking. I have often wondered whether Hester Prynne could have lived without little Pearl. When I turned my back on her, Mr. Easter, I knew that the bill had been paid. No judge, however inexorable, could have inflicted greater punishment.'

He made a gesture of assent.

'You know that I am fit to meet my child now?'

'Because of that I asked you to come to Charminster.'

'I saw my sisters yesterday afternoon, walking together upon the high ground. They looked at me as I passed. Jaqueline smiled. That brought back so much! And it meant that I pleased her. She always smiled when she saw some stranger that appealed to her, but she never spoke without a formal introduction. Afterwards, I walked back through Hog Lane, and saw the drawn blinds. It seems incredible that twenty years have passed since I stood by the pond and realised what those drawn blinds meant. But my sisters are old women.'

'They have been very happy.'

'I saw that, too. Prudence has grown more serene, kindlier. Yes; I'll come to luncheon with pleasure. I should like to meet your children.'

'Vere, as you know, is Rose's particular friend. Will next Sunday suit you?'

'Perfectly.'

'My wife will write a note.'

Before the Sunday came Mrs. Hooton and several other ladies had called or left cards. The only bookseller in the town displayed a row of Paul Newman's novels, and 'Mists' was in brisk demand.

Mrs. Hooton was delighted to meet the widow of the celebrity.

'I collected autographs once,' she admitted; 'and I have some interesting specimens—that of the Queen of Song amongst them.' As she mentioned this, Laura noticed that Mrs. Newman smiled, and the subtlety of the smile perplexed her. She wondered whether this quiet lady was satirical. Laura prattled on, speaking much of Charminster, and staring with frank interest at the stranger. She said presently: 'You remind me of an old friend.'

Her voice died away; the plump, pleasant face became grave. Rosetta perceived that Laura would say no more, and impulse seized her to admit boldly the slight resemblance, and use it as a key to unlock confidence. She said reflectively:

'Of whom do I remind you, Mrs. Hooton? I have an object in asking.'

'Of Rosetta Manleverer, who married Lord Brough, the South African man.'

'I thought so. You are not the first to notice the likeness.'

'You are much older than my friend would have been.' Then, very red, conscious of an indiscretion, she plunged deeper, making light of the fancied resemblance, which was what Rosetta wanted.

'The likeness is hardly perceptible. The colouring, the features, the voice are so different. I think it's the poise of the head, and a gesture of the hands.'

'I once knew Lady Brough—in India.'

'Indeed. I wish you could meet her daughter—the sweetest girl! She is with her cousins, Lord and Lady Mauleverer, for the season. I hear it is a fact that she is engaged to her cousin, Victor, the heir, you know. Poor Lord Mauleverer has no sons. Such a grief that must be! I have two dear little boys.'

'You say Miss Brough is engaged?'

'It is not published, but you may take it from me, Mrs. Newman, that it is so. A charming young fellow, so—so exactly right. He's in the Rifle Brigade, de—lightful manners. By the way, Rose Brough simply adores "Mists." There are passages in that sweet book—I hope you won't think me gushing, but I cried myself to sleep over it—there are bits, I say, which almost describe Charminster.'

Rosetta nodded.

'There are so many Charminsters in our dear England. I was born here, and have lived here all my life. It is a privilege to be part and parcel of what is best in one's own country, is it not?'

'Best?'

'I'm sure you know what I mean. As one grows older the appeal of what endures becomes so strong. I love every stick and stone.'

'I passed through a place called, I think, Hog Lane.'

'My dear Mrs. Newman, did you? I am so sorry. It will taint your interest in our dear old town. Hog Lane! I never go near Hog Lane if I can possibly help it, and I refuse absolutely to consider it as part of Charminster. Unhappily, the Dower House, where my dear old friends the Misses Mauleverer live, is at the end of Hog Lane. When I drink tea with them I have to drive through Hog Lane, but I tell my coachman' (thus Laura described the boy who drove the pony carriage) 'not to spare the whip. Mrs. Walkington, the banker's wife, who has a pair of horses, instructs her coachman to go round. It means an extra mile.'



Rosetta smiled.

She met Derek upon the following Sunday; and the young man informed her that he had just finished reading 'Back of Nowhere.'

'It's great,' he said, in his American slang.

'Hardly that, Mr. Devenish.'

'It catches hold of one, Mrs. Newman. You see, I've been out there. I know what the back of the world is like. The odd thing is it believes it's the front. A cowboy once asked me if I knew London and Paris. I told him I knew London fairly well, and he replied quite sincerely, "London is a nice little burg, but re—mote!"'

'I suppose it seemed remote to him.'

'Exactly. I say, "Back of Nowhere" is autobiographical, isn't it?'

'More or less.'

'Perhaps it's indiscreet to ask such a question. Victor Mauleverer wouldn't ask any. Do you know him?'

'That, I hope, is a pleasure to come. The name Mauleverer unlocks all doors in Charminster.'

'The doors with knockers kept dazzlingly bright. Ring and knock—and it will be opened unto you. There's no marching in unexpectedly.'

He laughed joyously, as if the humours of Charminster appealed to him.

'Are you one of those burglarious spirits who like to enter houses without ringing and knocking?'

'I think I am, Mrs. Newman.'

'You would burgle confidence?'

Her quickness surprised him, for the idea was in his mind at the moment. He nodded—

'If it can be got no other way. One wants to know things.'

'Dear me! You are a bold young man.'

'They are too timid in Charminster, too poisonously afraid of doing or saying the wrong thing. Living here is like watching a camp fire that is almost out.'

'And you want to use the bellows?'

'I do; I do! They need oxygen. In our Bank—and every where else—the windows are open at the bottom. I mentioned Victor Mauleverer just now. Arthur Walkington, the banker's son, tries to understudy him. But Mauleverer is too right.'

'What do you mean?'

'His rightness, you see, is not his own. He inherited it. His people have spent five hundred years in eliminating everything from their lives and thoughts that is wrong. The result is a sort of dull perfection, a stodgy self-complacency, not to be budged from its surroundings.'

Rosetta smiled.

'You think a youth should spread his wings instead of preening them?'

'That's the whole matter in a phrase.'

'Tell me more about the Mauleverers. Isn't there a niece?'

'Rather!' his eyes flashed with excitement at the prospect of letting himself go before a sympathetic stranger, who, unless her looks belied her, could be trusted. 'Rose Brough, the daughter of Lord Brough.'

'More Brough than Mauleverer?'

'Inwardly. I wish she was here. I should like her to meet you.'

'That's very complimentary, but what do you know of me?'

'I know you're one of the elect.'

'Elect?'

'That's my word for the few who can get outside the station of life in which they were born—the few who can stand upright in other people's shoes. The vicar is the only one in Charminster. Rose Brough owes a lot to him.'

'Does she?'

'And she owes something to "Mists."'

'That is very pleasant to hear. What does she owe to you?'

Beneath her penetrating glance Derek blushed, but he replied lightly enough:

'I've opened her eyes a bit.'

'To what?'

'To the fact that the Mauleverer standard does not wave over everything.'

'Does she think that your ideas are right?'

'I have never claimed that my ideas are right. I only claim to have ideas, and I want to give them room to grow. Every Jack ought to have his bean-stalk, and climb it. I've begun to climb mine.'

'But isn't Jill rather young to climb with you?'

'She must climb her own stalk, not mine.'

With that their first talk ended, leaving Rosetta prē-

possessed in the young man's favour. He reminded her amazingly of Septimus at his age. He took hold of things firmly but not too roughly. With all his boldness, he was modest enough. She wondered what impression he had made upon her sisters, wondering, also, whether he had attempted to exhibit himself to them other than what he was. Ever since the chance meeting with the ladies, Rosetta had desired to talk with them, to measure the changes, to enjoy the sound of their voices, to feel the soft touch of their wrinkled hands. An ocean of differences rolled between her and them, but love dared the journey. She longed to enter her old home, to sit beneath the limes upon the velvety lawn, to smell the pot-pourri which distilled so subtle an essence from the big Wedgwood jar near the Queen Anne cabinet.

The idea filled her mind that, given certain conditions, she might forget for a few minutes the long, weary years, and become the Rosetta of eighteen, and as such be liable to meet Rose upon equal terms. Wandering by the Char, revisiting the haunts of her childhood, there had been instants of sweet forgetfulness. Once, upon a warm afternoon, she had fallen asleep not far from the old trysting-place. Waking up, still drowsy, she saw the placid Char reflecting faithfully, with the limpidity of such reflections, the tall elms of her old home. And immediately she had thought: 'I have been asleep. I may be late for tea. I wonder whether Prudence will scold?' The mirage faded from her mind, as the breeze obliterated the image of the elms, but the miracle had been accomplished. Time had put back his clock. And if once, why not again—and again?

Happy chance gave her the opportunity she desired. Upon the Tuesday morning after meeting Derek she was sketching the Dower House as seen from the Char, the garden side so different from the prim front, which seemed to close its eyes superciliously upon Hog Lane. To the left of the lawn was a large green-and-white striped umbrella, beneath which the ladies were sitting. Jaqueline was embroidering, while Prudence read aloud. The air was warm and still, but not sultry. The freshness of June lingered yet upon the Ramblers; in the shade the dew still sparkled upon the lawn; the water-meadows were blazing with buttercups and daisies. From the place where

Rosetta was sketching, the wild meadow seemed to meet the trim lawn, but a sunk fence—as Rosetta knew—divided the two. It was cunningly built, impossible to see till you nearly fell into it, but a formidable obstacle, quite enough to keep not too active trespassers at bay.

Rosetta stared at the garden and the two figures in it. The pleasure was delightfully ordered, an epitome of beauty never suffered to degenerate into luxuriance. The rigorous pruning of yew and cypress and rhododendron had been done so carefully and slowly that none but a gardener could have suspected the constant shears, the never-ending thinning-out, the art that concealed itself so artfully. Near the ladies was a rose-garden, with a sundial in the centre of it. Prudence had planned it during the summer succeeding the death of her father. During Rosetta's youth the rose-garden had looked too neat and formal. Such vagabonds as Dorothy Perkins had not been allowed to wander in it. Now Lady Gay and Dorothy strayed everywhere, like impudent children in a primly furnished drawing-room.

'Discipline is relaxed,' thought Rosetta.

At this moment the tyke, busy amongst some furze bushes, bolted a rabbit. Loudly yapping, the tyke pursued. The pair crossed the meadow, and Rosetta perceived that the garden was likely to be invaded. Across the sunk fence leapt the rabbit; after him sprang the dog. Bunny found a burrow in the rhododendrons; the terrier found compensation in the sudden sight of Jaqueline's cat, spitting and blaspheming at the trespasser. Rosetta hesitated for an instant. The tyke might tackle the tabby, and he was quite capable of snapping viciously at restraining hands. To the side of the sunk fence was a path, and a gate, generally unlocked during the daytime. Rosetta sped along this, calling to a dog too engrossed with the cat's shocking language to do anything except bark at it. The ladies had risen, obviously flustered. Jaqueline perceived the mistress of the dog, and hastened to meet her, exclaimingly pantingly:

'Please come in, and get your dog.'

'How dare you, sir!' exclaimed Rosetta.

At sound of her voice, Jaqueline started, and a bewildered expression came upon her face. The tyke scampered up to his mistress, and the situation was saved.

'Thank you,' said Jaqueline. 'You are quite out of breath.'

'I saw that murder impended, so I ran.'

'You must sit down and rest,' said Prudence.

'It is Mrs. Newman, I believe,' murmured Jaqueline.

Rosetta bowed, now at ease. The ladies blinked at her, approving the simple lines of her dress.

'Our friend, Mrs. Easter, spoke of you,' exclaimed Prudence. 'Pray sit down. Can we offer you any refreshment—a glass of lemonade?'

'No, thank you. I was sketching this side of your house from the tow-path.'

'My sister, Jaqueline, draws in water-colour,' said Prudence, as Rosetta took the chair indicated.

'I spoil much nice paper,' said Jaqueline modestly. 'Perhaps, presently, you will show us your sketch. I should be so interested.'

The ladies smiled graciously. Laura Hooton had spoken of the stranger with enthusiasm. Prudence was saying to herself: 'Yes, yes; Mrs. Newman is a gentlewoman; and she looks distinguished.' Jaqueline was thinking at the same time: 'When she spoke to her dog I was reminded of Rosetta.'

Presently the three ladies sauntered together to the spot where Rosetta was sketching, pausing more than once to admire some familiar bit of landscape.

'From the high ground,' said Prudence, 'one has a charming view. Upon a fine day it is possible to catch a glimpse of the Channel.'

'And if the wind is in the right quarter,' added Jaqueline, 'one is able to enjoy a sea breeze.'

Rosetta smiled. How many thousand times had her sisters spoken of the sea-breeze, and the high ground, where they walked at least four or five times a week! Then the sketch was duly admired, in phrases that dropped gracefully from the thin, delicate lips.

'I could not show you *my* drawings,' murmured Jaqueline; 'they are so dreadfully amateurish. Our dear sister, Lady Brough, had the talent denied to me, but unhappily we were unable to give her good teaching.'

Prudence said softly:

'Mrs. Hooton told us that you had met Lady Brough in India.'

'Yes,' said Rosetta.

'Did she speak of her old home?'

'Often.'

The ladies sighed. Jaqueline carried a small camp-stool, which she opened. Prudence sat down upon it, and Jaqueline asked anxiously: 'We didn't come too fast for you, Sister?'

'Certainly not.' She explained curtly to Rosetta, in the voice that dismissed intimate matters as unseemly and irrelevant:

'My sister makes an absurd fuss over me.' In her most courtly tone, she continued: 'My health, Mrs. Newman, which is not quite so robust as formerly, precludes me from making calls, but if you would waive ceremony, and take luncheon with us to-day, we should be so pleased. You will have finished your drawing by then.'

'You are very kind.'

'It is you who will be kind. Please say "Yes," if you have no better engagement.'

'I shall be delighted,' said Rosetta, and Jaqueline wondered vaguely why the pale cheeks of this interesting stranger were perceptibly flushed.

'We lunch at one. Will you come in through the garden?'

After a decent interval the Sisters retired, to make—as Rosetta well knew—some slight additions to the midday meal. Jaqueline would be sure to mix a salad, and Prudence would despatch Crump to the cellar for a bottle of Barsac. Fresh flowers would be gathered, and the best silver would shine softly upon one of the thick, ancient table-cloths, woven with the de Clancy arms.

The ladies walked in silence till they had regained the sanctuary of the garden. As they were crossing the lawn Jaqueline asked quietly:

'Sister, does she remind you of anybody?'

'There is something about her face and voice. I have been searching my memory, but fruitlessly.'

'She reminds me of Rosetta.'

Prudence considered this reflectively.

'Yes, there is—something. That explains the appeal. I have seldom felt so drawn towards a stranger. And her drawing—! She portrayed our home so tenderly, as if she cared about the things which are dear to us.'

They entered the house, and summoned Crump.

At luncheon ordinary topics were discussed, and dismissed

when they threatened to become interesting. But Rosetta remarked that Time seemed to have softened the judgment of her sisters, or had they become too indolent to exercise it? The serene light of evening glowed in their pale blue eyes. They appeared to be moving gently to eternal rest, willing to lie down when the hour came, but placidly desirous of making the most of the hours that might yet remain.

Rosetta was aware that Crump eyed her with wrinkled interrogation. The aged handmaiden had become a privileged person. She spoke to Prudence with authority, and aroused protest, when she brought in two cups of black coffee instead of three.

'If I had brought a cup for you, ma'am, you would have taken it.'

'She is an old servant and friend,' said Jaqueline to Rosetta. 'My sister has a weakness for strong coffee, which is so bad for her. Crump has been with us for forty years. Once we ruled her, and now she rules us.'

To Rosetta's surprise, Prudence nodded amiably, glancing regretfully at the forbidden beverage.

The coffee had been served in the inner drawing-room, and Rosetta saw that her portrait hung in the place of honour which, in her day, had been occupied by the Reynolds' kit-cat of Miss Prudence de Clancy. The youthful face smiled down upon her, as she wondered amazedly: 'Was I ever like that?'

'A speaking likeness,' murmured Jaqueline. 'You recognise it, of course?'

'Lady Brough's daughter lives with you?' said Rosetta.

'Yes.'

The Sisters smiled at each other, and that smile helped to reward the mother who had given up her child. It was illuminating in its radiant tenderness.

'This is her latest photograph,' said Jaqueline.

She placed in Rosetta's hand a large framed example of the best London work.

'It does not do the child justice,' remarked Prudence. 'Her beauty lies in her expression.'

'She must have a strong will,' said Rosetta.

The ladies raised their eyebrows. The remark seemed to them not quite complimentary. Jaqueline said hastily:

'The child has not indicated that, Mrs. Newman. Ever since God sent her to us she has deferred in all things to our



judgment. So far as I can recollect we have never had occasion to punish her. Once, indeed——'

She paused, glancing at Prudence, who said smilingly: 'Go on, my dear, the incident of the riding-switch will amuse Mrs. Newman.'

So the story of the two cuts was told with soft chucklings, and Prudence, staring meditatively at her pink, wrinkled palm, added:

'My sister struck uncommonly hard.'

'We came downstairs,' Jaqueline continued, 'apprehensive that our china might be attacked, and we found Rose on her knees in front of her mother's picture. After that, we found occasion to leave her alone in this room whenever she had been naughty. Her dear mother never died for her.'

The words were hardly audible, but they echoed in Rosetta's heart. To hide her agitation, she rose, and stared at her portrait, trying to realise what it had meant to her child. She went away soon afterwards, promising to come again, and leaving behind the morning's sketch.

After she had gone Jaqueline said to Prudence:

'A woman of rare sympathy and feeling! When I told her that story of little Rose the tears were in her eyes.'

'Perhaps,' answered Prudence, 'she has lost a child.'

## CHAPTER X.

### DEREK LEAVES CHARMINSTER.

DEREK, meanwhile, went on meditating flight. To make this easier and inevitable, the work at the Bank became daily more irksome and disagreeable. The young man was directly under Arthur Walkington, an insufferable spark at most times, but never more so than when glowing with authority. Derek never saw Arthur's smooth pink face, with its slightly protuberant eyes, without wishing to hit it, and, unhappily, he had never learnt to disguise his feelings. Arthur Walkington, for his part, was well aware that his father's clerk eyed him ironically from tip to toe with an expression aggressive and critical. Arthur was aware, also, that Derek's name might be found in

the Book of Books, as a cadet of a family whose head ranked as a belted earl. One day, young Lord Charminster had come into the Bank and said, with an extraordinary lack of any sense of the fitness of things :

'Hullo, Devenish!' to which Derek replied : 'Hullo, Charminster, how goes it?' Afterwards Arthur had deemed it his duty to say to his subordinate :

'You rather forgot yourself this morning, Devenish.'

'Never! I forget many things and persons, but not myself.'

'You treated Lord Charminster as if he were your equal.'

'He can't complain of that. If I don't choose to assert my superiority you ought to applaud my modesty.'

Arthur turned from pink to bright red. In these little encounters he was uncomfortably aware that Derek had the best of it. Nevertheless, his opinion upon what was right and proper inside his father's bank being solidly based upon ignorance of most things outside it, he was able to retort :

'We don't like that sort of thing.'

'Did you see his lordship wince?'

'He is too much of a gentleman to betray his feelings.'

Derek's eyes sparkled. He had played much cricket with the most important depositor in the Charminster Bank, and at that moment happened to have a note in his pocket—a note of some face value when presented across the counter.

'Honestly, Walkington, do you think that Lord Charminster was annoyed by my familiarity?'

'Honestly, I do.'

'Then how do you account for this?'

He presented the note :

DEAR DEREK,—Do you think you could get short leave in July and come to me for my cricket week? Also, I want to hear all about your adventures, and to swap a few yarns with you. While you were in California I put in a year in India.

Ever yours,  
C.

'Heaps coals of fire on my head, doesn't he?' said Derek.

Arthur Walkington replied stiffly :

'I see no reason to alter my opinion.'

'Reason,' said Derek, not quite so pleasantly, 'would not alter your opinion.' He continued, maliciously : 'Is there anything disgraceful about this business?'

'Disgraceful?'

'Anything to be ashamed of in polishing my breeches on one of your stools? One loses caste, I know, sweeping crossings—why, I don't pretend to explain—but banking and brewing are exceptions, aren't they? A great-aunt of mine married one of the Wildes, and the family was quite pleased when my cousin Fanny became engaged to a Bargus.'

'What on earth do you mean?' demanded Arthur, sulkily.

'Simply this: If you consider my position here to be menial, why, then, I take it, I ought to "my lord" Charminster, even if he happens to be a pal of mine.'

Arthur thought that he saw a way out of the wood.

'You may not be aware,' he said loftily, 'that officers on parade address their seniors as "Sir."'

'That argument would wash well enough if you had your facts complete. A captain, on parade, addresses his subaltern as Mr. So-and-so. Lord Charminster, who happens to be my junior, did not address me as Mr. Devenish. Had he done so, I should have been punctilious in observing the formalities.'

Arthur had the last word, as he turned on his heel.

'When you answer that note,' he said acidly, 'you can inform your friend that we are too busy to spare you during July.'

'Oh, damn!' said Derek.

After this mild passage at arms, relations between the young men became strained, and, from Mr. Walkington's manner, Derek was able to divine more unpleasantness to come. However, he grinned pleasantly when he was snubbed, and did his work thoroughly, comforting himself with the reflection that the world was wide, with plenty of room in it for strong young men.

He had met Rosetta several times, with an ever-increasing sense of intimacy and pleasure, and, of course, he confided to her sympathetic ears that banking was not exactly his vocation.

'What keeps you here?' she asked.

He replied frankly: 'Two women.'

'Two?'

'My mother is one.'

Rosetta's brown eyes, which had long lost their fire, smouldered dimly, and the colour flowed into her thin cheeks. Derek

thought: 'By Jove! she must have been a beauty once!' And he saw that she mutely invited his confidence.

'The other, Mrs. Newman, is a young lady whom you have never met. I ought,' he continued desperately, 'to cut and run from her, but I can't. She—she's a ward in Chancery—has money and all that. What do you think the Lord Chancellor would have to say to me?'

'It is more exciting, isn't it, to speculate upon what the young lady would say first?'

She spoke quietly, wondering whether her beating heart would betray her. The vicar had been unable to give information upon the point of Rose's feelings for Derek.

'The young lady is very young, and quite able to pick and choose. She likes me as a friend. She hasn't a ghost of an idea of what I feel about her.'

'Don't be too sure of that!'

'I do feel sure. Also there's another fellow staked out for her—a good chap, too. I've spoken of him—Victor Mauleverer, one of the victors who win big prizes without much effort.'

'Now I can guess the young lady's name.'

He blushed.

'It makes it easier not to mention it.'

This delicacy appealed to her; she nodded, keeping her eyes upon his face. Derek went on seriously: 'Pressure will be brought to bear. That's what tears me. Pressure of the subtlest sort—persuasive kisses, sighs, tender touches of the hand. If the war should break out—'

'War must break out.'

'If Mauleverer was ordered to the front he might have a fighting chance.'

Rosetta smiled.

'Mr. Victor Mauleverer, you think, must seek reputation as a lover at the cannon's mouth?'

'I believe a V.C. or even a D.S.O. might do the trick.'

Then Rosetta said abruptly:

'Can you write as well as you talk, Mr. Devenish?'

'Write, Mrs. Newman?'

'A gift for vivid description, and such experiences as you have had, are assets of value. Does journalism appeal to you?'

He considered this, with brightening eyes, beholding himself

as war correspondent, a rival for reputation with the other fellow.

'I've no pull, you see.'

'But I have. If you can write stuff salted to the palate of the town I might be able to help you.'

'By Jove!'

'You seem to like the idea.'

In some excitement he made confession. He had written one or two things—sea sketches, fo'c'sle yarns—never shown to a soul as yet. Would Mrs. Newman be kind enough to glance at them? Hardly waiting for her reply, he went on with enthusiasm:

'A job of that sort would square my circle. My mother could leave this and go to London. She would be glad to get out of Charminster. Everybody here knows her story, and she daren't look her friends in the face, poor darling!'

His voice softened delightfully, confirming Rosetta in her opinion that he was a good son, able to understand and sympathise with the weakness of a woman—a rare quality in youth. That night she read the sketches. When she met him again her voice was full of encouragement.

'The stuff is there. All you need is constant practice of the tricks of the trade. What does Mrs. Devenish say?'

'She's keen as mustard.'

In a more practical tone Rosetta set forth the possibilities. Derek must begin, of course, at the lowest rung in the ladder, and master conscientiously the elementary principles of his craft.

'I'll work like a nigger.'

'Niggers don't work very hard, do they?'

He laughed joyously, stretching out his strong arms, eager to embrace the world.

'How I've been cramped!'

'You won't be very free in London. There are Arthur Walkingtons in all newspaper offices.'

'But I shall look out.'

'I'll write to a certain editor to-night. I know he can give you a position, and then you must keep it.'

'I'll keep it,' said Derek grimly.

Next day she drank tea with the Sisters, who made no effort to disguise the pleasure her society afforded them. From a slight colour in their cheeks Rosetta guessed that something of

importance had taken place. Jaqueline was restless till she disclosed the secret. The 'child' was coming home for three days, escorted by the heir of the Mauleverers. Rosetta's voice was not quite so firm, as she asked: 'Am I to infer anything?'

'We don't know what to infer. Rose would be the first to tell us. He has been running up to town lately.'

'We want you to meet the child,' said Prudence. Then she added: 'And she wants to meet you. We have attempted to describe you. "Mists" made a great impression. We said that you were leaving at the end of the month, and we were not expecting Rose to return much before Goodwood.'

'I may stay on a little longer.'

'Our fine air has done you good, Mrs. Newman. It is relaxing, so I have been told, in the Lake district? Just so. A change is expedient. We go to Bognor every August.'

'At Bognor, long ago, I had a glimpse of your little niece.'

She described the incident, which seemed to excite the ladies. Jaqueline recalled it tearfully:

'To be sure! The child came in and told us that a friend of her mother's had spoken to her. I had to leave the room.'

Prudence nodded solemnly. The Sisters had remarked to each other that Mrs. Newman possessed the portentous power of evoking confidence. She lured it from locked hearts with soft, appealing eyes and pretty gestures. Jaqueline continued nervously:

'Was our sister unhappy when you knew her?'

As she spoke she glanced at Prudence, dreading a frown, but Prudence nodded again, with increased solemnity.

'Yes,' said Rosetta. 'Few were aware of it, but I was one.'

'The dear saint!' ejaculated Jaqueline. With another glance at Prudence, she went on hurriedly: 'We did not know; we never suspected; the marriage was not all we could have wished.'

'It was not,' said Rosetta.

'Mary Mauleverer told us as much in this very room. Yes, we think of her as saint and martyr, the best and most courageous woman that ever lived.'

Rosetta moved uneasily, but the faintest of smiles flickered round her lips as the fact of her canonisation sank into her mind. Taking silence to mean assent, Jaqueline rushed into further confidence, painting the dead Rosetta with the prismatic colours

of fancy, and—like the early Italian masters—gilding the outlines with finest gold, untarnishable by Time. This revelation of herself as saint was even more distressing to Rosetta than reading her obituary notices. As the intimate friend of the dead lady, what could she do but stare unprotestingly at a portrait which bore no resemblance to the original? She beheld herself enshrined, an object of worship for two elderly ladies and a young girl, a Madonna immaculate and inviolate!

She could have wept or laughed. The strange inconsistency of human nature inclined her, perhaps, to laughter. Her sisters had forgotten their own flesh and blood, substituting in its place an elusive spirit compounded of all the virtues. She had risen from the dead—perfection—to remain for ever on a pedestal.

She trembled, for some savage instinct urged her to tear down the graven image, to roll the saint in the dust. Love, as a sunbeam, shone through a tiny hole in the blinds of the Sisters, transmuting that dust into powdered gold. As these thoughts rushed in and out of her mind, she heard Jaqueline's voice, recreating an impossible Rosetta and rejoicing over the recreation.

They had not changed. No sense of true proportion or perspective had come to them. Their passion for what they held to be good and beautiful was intensified. And their detestation of evil and ugliness must have intensified also.

She went away very sad, the penance of unmerited praise heavy upon her soul.

Outside, the sun was shining with oppressive splendour. The air was heavy and languorous as Rosetta walked slowly towards Charminster, through Hog Lane. The Sisters had urged her to go by the Char, and she had refused to do so, because the trim, smiling landscape would be sure to exasperate her. She was approaching the 'John Barleycorn,' and the loafers about the bar entrance eyed her with interest, wiping thick, thirsty lips, mouthing a husky appeal to benevolence. Rosetta marked them, beholding their coarse, swinish faces, their heavy misshapen bodies, smelling the reek of stale beer, hearing the inarticulate grunting. She tried to measure what sensual indulgence was to them. Did it mean everything? Did it mean oblivion?



She thought with a shudder of their wives and children.

Derek was approaching the tavern, swinging along with his long, easy strides.

'You here?'

'And why not?'

That had remained a favourite expression ever since childhood. The sharpness of it had always disconcerted the Sisters. For an instant it disconcerted Derek. Then he understood.

'The reek does go up to heaven, doesn't it?'

'And too many of us blame heaven for it.'

'I'm not one of those idiots, Mrs. Newman.'

He turned to walk towards the town with her.

They were interrupted by a shrill, discordant voice proceeding from what at first sight seemed to be a bundle of ragged and dirty clothes, crowned by a hat which two years ago had cost four shillings and elevenpence.

'This what you call work?' demanded the voice.

One of the loafers replied hoarsely: 'Tis you, Annie, I do declare. What be you mumbudgetting round here for?'

The other loafers snickered, as the dehumanised bundle of rags answered fiercely:

'I be come to fetch home an idle, ale-swillin' fool.'

'You was glad enough to marry me, dearie.'

'May God A'mighty and my children forgive me for that. Think I took ye for a chimbley ornament?'

The men snickered again, arousing wrath in the husband. He clenched a huge fist, and bore down upon his wife, who faced him valiantly. She was a small, thin woman, with bright, feverish eyes, and he a giant, twice the size of Derek Devenish.

'Walk on quickly,' said Derek, in a low voice to Rosetta; 'and please don't look back. I can take care of myself.'

Rosetta obeyed. She had perceived a brutal glare in the navy's bloodshot eyes. He meant to strike his wife, and the other men meant to look on. She heard Derek saying quietly, 'Now, my man, none of that,' and the hoarse answer, 'Better shift, young feller, or I'll do for ye with my boof.'

Rosetta wondered whether there was a constable farther on. She quickened her pace, but glanced over her shoulder. As she did so, the woman overtook her, saying, breathlessly:

'Tom'll kill 'un. There bain't none can stand up agen' Tom. Time and time I've prayed that he might be licked once.'

'Prayers are answered sometimes,' said Rosetta.

'They're at it,' said the woman. 'Us had better stay and watch on.'

Rosetta wanted to run. Violence in any form was abhorrent to her. She peered the length of Hog Lane, hoping to perceive a stalwart guardian of the peace; as she did so she heard a dull, crunching blow, and a sharp exclamation from her companion:

'Well, I never!'

The navy had rushed in, swinging a vicious right arm. Derek ducked, jabbed the big fellow under the chin, and as his head went up, struck again, landing square on the point of the jaw.

'That's over,' said Derek, staring at his bleeding knuckles. He glanced at the prostrate giant. 'When he comes round,' he said to the other men, 'tell him that I'll half kill him next time if I hear of his ill-treating his wife.'

Some wives are expected to attack those who assail their lords and masters; this wife was an exception. She curtsied as Derek approached, and said gratefully:

'Thank you, sir. I'll never let 'un 'ear the last o' this, and you, seemin'ly, not 'arf 'is size neither!'

'Sorry this had to happen before you,' said Derek to Rosetta.

'I am glad,' Rosetta replied. After a moment's hesitation, she added firmly: 'The man who can protect the wives of other men is likely to cherish his own.'

The incident, however, had a sequel, for a garbled version of the encounter happened to reach the august ears of Mr. Walkington. A clerk of his had been brawling in Hog Lane. That was enough—more than enough—to frighten depositors. He sent for Derek next morning, and Arthur assisted at that unforgettable interview. Father and son were pinker than usual, and the small eyes of the banker blinked furtively, as if he were trying not to see a very present fear that hovered about his ripe rotundities. Mrs. Walkington, nodding portentously behind a large silver urn, had bidden her husband at breakfast to be careful in his dealings with a wild young man, who had thrashed his own father. To this the banker replied 'Tut!' Nevertheless, he had asked Arthur to be present.

The interview took place in Mr. Walkington's private room.

The Charminster Bank, known as 'Old Bank' (to distinguish it from a younger institution of much less importance), faced High Street with smug modesty, bashfully retiring, as it were, from a large linen-draper's establishment and a grocer's shop on each side of it. Periodical 'white sales' caused the brick bank to blush perpetually; and young women flattening and cooling their noses against immense sheets of plate glass could behold, out of the corner of their eyes, a many-paned window behind which the banker bulged largely, sitting at an immense mahogany desk and writing with a quill pen of ultra-respectability. To the right of the window was the main entrance, and to the right of that again were two windows which illuminated very insufficiently the large, low room in which the clerical business of the bank was carried on. When these windows were opened at the bottom, stout housewives buying kippers exposed for sale outside the grocer's could peep in and watch with awe a dozen young men at work. The young men could smell the kippers from nine to five—when the wind was in the south-west—and inhale content with the reflection that they were exalted above the common herd.

Derek had always loathed this big, dingy room, with its solid, old-fashioned appointments, and its fusty smells, and its smug air of superiority to the shops that flanked it. The nicely graduated smile of the cashier irritated him; the man's bland voice, whenever he greeted an important depositor, so different from the sharp words of command flung at his subordinates, never failed to provoke acidity of mind. The other clerks were in the bank and of it, and could never get out of it (poor devils). They could contrast their position with that of the counter-jumpers in frock coats next door, and devoutly thank Providence for His merciful goodness. Derek did his work better than they did, possibly because he knew that it would not endure for ever.

'What is this I hear, Mr. Devenish?' began Mr. Walkington.

'Good-morning,' said Derek, with the malicious intent of teaching the banker better manners. Father and son developed a deeper tinge of pink.

'I am told that yesterday afternoon you were brawling in Hog Lane with a drunken navy.'

'You have been misinformed, sir.'

'Were you, or were you not, fighting outside the "John Barleycorn" tavern?'

We hold no brief for Derek as a clerk in Old Bank. He ought, of course, to have explained civilly that he was protecting a half-starved woman against the brutal assault of her husband. This, however, he was in no humour to do.

'I knocked down a man,' he said quietly. 'And I regret——'

'Ha! You regret? Well, sir, I regret, we regret——' he glanced at his son, as Derek interrupted:

'My regret, sir, is possibly not on all fours with your regret. I am sincerely sorry that there was no fight. I should have enjoyed hammering the blackguard. As it is, I cut my knuckles and slightly strained the tendon of my wrist.'

Mr. Walkington flew the magenta, advertised next door as the fashionable colour of the hour.

'Have you anything more to say, young man?'

'Only this—that I wish to leave the Bank as soon as it will be convenient to you.'

Mr. Walkington pulled himself together.

'That will be this morning, sir.'

'I am much obliged,' said Derek imperturbably. 'Gratitude has been defined as a lively sense of future favours to come. I look for no favours from you, sir, but I am grateful for the kindness and courtesy which I have not received, and take leave of you with whole-hearted satisfaction.'

He bowed, smilingly, and went out. Arthur had taken the precaution to leave the door of his father's private room wide open, so that the other clerks might derive benefit—and perhaps pleasure—from a snubbing about to be administered to an audacious and impudent servant. As Derek left the room, snickers of discreetly suppressed laughter were audible in the clerical department.

*(To be continued.)*

### *THE CHILDREN'S COUNTRY HOLIDAY FUN.*

5280 LETTERS, 872 Sketches, 199 Collections, all in parcels neatly tied up, the name, age, and sex of the writer, artist, or collector clearly written on the first page of the covering paper. There they lie, all around me, stack upon stack. The sketches are crude but extraordinarily vivid and unaffected; the collections are very scrappy but show affectionate care; the letters are written in childish unformed characters, and are of varying lengths from a sheet of notepaper to ten pages of foolscap, but one and all deal with the same subject. What that subject is shall be told by a maiden of nine years old :

On one Thursday morning my Mother woke me and said, ' To-day is Country Holiday Fun,' so I got up and put my clothes on.

On that Thursday morning, July 27, 22,624 happy children left London and its drab monotonous streets, and went for a fortnight's visit into the country, or by the sea. Oh! the joy, the preparation, the excitement, the hopes, the fears, the anxieties lest anything should prevent the start; but at last, by the superhuman efforts of all concerned, the Committee ladies, the teachers, and the railway officials, the whole gay, glad, big army of little people were successfully got off. It is from these 22,624 children, and 21,756 more who took their places two weeks later, that my 5280 letters come; for only those who really choose to write are encouraged to do so.

In almost all cases the journey is fully described, the ride in the 'bus, the fear of being late, the parcel and how ' it fell out,' the gentlemen at the station, the porter who gave a drink of water ' cause we were all hot,' the gentleman who gave the porter 6d. because he said : ' This 6d. is for you for thinking as how the children would be thirsty.' The number that managed to get in each carriage, the boy who lost his cap ' for the wind went so fast when my head was outside looking,' the hedges, the cows, the big boards with ——— Pills written on them, how ' it seemed as if I was going that way and the hills and cows and trees were going the other way.' It is all told with

the fresh force of novelty and youth. The names of the stations and the mileage is often noted, as well as the noise. 'We shouted for joy,' writes a boy of eleven. 'We told them it was rude to holler so,' writes a more staid girl. 'I got tired of singing and went to sleep,' records a boy of eight; but the journey over there follows the description often given with some awe of how

we all went and were counted together, and there were the ladies waiting for us, and the gentleman read out our names and our lady's name and then we went home with our right ladies,

and then, almost without exception, comes the bald but important statement, 'and then we had Tea.' Indeed, all through the letters there is frequent mention of the gastronomic conditions, which appear to occupy a large place among the memories of the country visit. Evidently the regularity of the meals makes a change which strikes the imagination.

I got up, washed in hot water and had my breakfast. It was duck's egg. I then went out in the fields till dinner was ready. I had a good dinner and then took a rest. We had Tea. My lady gave us herrings and apple pie for tea, then we went on the Green and looked about and then came home and had supper and went to bed.

Some letters, especially those written after the first visit to the country, contain nothing but the plain unvarnished tale of the supply of regular food. One girl burns with indignation because

we girls was sent to bed at 7.30 and got no supper, but the boys was let up later and got bread and a big thick bit of cheese.

A boy of eight chronicles that

I had custard for my Tea and some jelly which was called corn flour.

One small observer had apparently discovered the importance of meal-times even to the sea itself, for he writes: 'The sea always went out at dinner time and came back when Tea was ready.' I can see my readers smile, but to those of us who know intimately the lives of the poor, the significance of meals and their regularity occupying so large a place in a child's mind is more pathetic than comic.

From all the letters the impression is gathered of the generosity of the poor hostesses to the London children. For

5s. a week (not 9d. a day) a growing hungry boy or girl is taken into a cottager's home, put in the best bed, cared for, fed three or four times a day, and often entertained at cost of time, thought, or money.

I like the day which was Bank holiday Monday because it was a very joyfull day. My Lady took me to a Flower Show. It was 3d. to go in but she paid, and I had swings and saw the flowers, and then we had bought Tea, and a man gave away ginger beer.

Another girl of eleven writes :

My lady took me to Windsor Castle. The first thing I saw was the Thames. I went and had a paddled and then I went in the Castle and saw a lot of apple trees.

The visits to Windsor are modern-day versions of the old story of the Cat who went to see the King and saw only ' Mousey sitting under the Chair,' for another child records :

There were plenty of orchards with apple trees in it. But we would not pick them, or else we would be locked up but I went in the Castle and I saw a very large table with fifty chairs all round it and a piano and a looking glass covered up on the wall.

One boy who was taken to the lighthouse, though only ten, was evidently eager for useful information. He writes :

I asked the man how many candlepowers it was but I forgot what he said—

an experience not unknown to his elders and betters!

This child records that ' when playing on the beach I made Buckingham Palace but a big boy came along and trod it and so we went home to bed '—an unconscious repetition of the often-recorded conclusion of Pepys' eventful days.

One of the small excursionists was taken by her hostess to see Tonbridge, and writes : ' We went to the muzeum wear we saw jitnoes of different people.'

The hospitality of the clergymen and their families and the goodness of doctors is also often mentioned. Some of the children write so vividly that the country vicarage and its sweet-smelling flowers, the hot curate and the active ladies, rise up as a picture, the ' atmosphere ' of which is kindness and ' the values ' incalculable. Other children merely record the facts



—in some cases anticipating time and establishing an order of clergywomen.

'We asked the Vicar Miss Leigh if we could swim and she said No because one boy caught a cold.'

'We all went to the Reveren to a party.' 'Saturday mornings we went to the Rectory haveing games, swings, sea sawes and refreshments.' 'The party by the Church was fine.' 'The had a Church down there called the Salvation Army. I thought there was only one Salvation Army.'

One of the vicars hardly conveyed the impression he intended, for the boy writes :

We went to Church in the morning and in the afternoon for a walk as the Clergyman told us not to go to Sunday School as he wanted us to enjoy ourselves.

One wonders if the Sunday School organisation and the 'intolerable strain' which would be put on it by London visitors was in that vicar's mind.

The letter that is sent by the Countryside Committee to the children before they leave London tells them in simple language something about the trees and flowers and creatures which they will see during their holiday, and asks them to write on anything which they themselves have observed or which gave them pleasure to see.

The trees seemed so happy they danced.

The wind was blowing and the branches of the trees was swinging themselves.

The rainbow is made of raindrops and the sun, tears and smiles.

It was nice to sit on the grass and see the trees prancing in the breeze.

The extracts show, in the four small mortals who had each spent the ten years of their lives in crowded streets, an almost poetic capacity, and the beginning of a power of nature sympathy that will be a source of unrecorded solace. The sights of the night impress many children, the sky seen for the first time uninterrupted by gas lamps.

When I (aged eleven) looked into the sky one night you could hardly see any of the blue for it was light up with stars.

I saw a star shoot out of the sky and then it settled in a different place.

One night I kept awake and looked for the stars and saw the Big Bear of stars.

At night the moon looked as if it were a Queen and the stars were her Attendants.

The clouds are making way for the moon to come out.

The sun, its rising and setting, is also frequently mentioned. One child had developed patriotism to such an extent as to write :

One day I looked up to the Sky and saw the sun was rising in the shape of the British Isles.

Alas! What would the Kaiser think?

Another of my correspondents expressed surprise that 'the moon came from where the sky touched the Earth,' an evidence of street-bound horizon.

In other letters the writers record :

I saw the sun set it was like a big silver Eagle's wing laying on a cliff.

When the sun was setting out of the clouds came something that looked like a County Council Steamer.

That must have been a rather alarming sunset, but hardly less so than 'the cloud which was like Saint Paul's Cathedral coming down on our heads.'

The animals gave great pleasure and created wonder :

The cows made a grunting noise, the baa lambs made a pretty little shriek.

The cows I saw were lazy, they were laying. One was a bull who I daresay had been tossing somebody.

I heard a bird chirping it was make a noise like chirp chirp twee.

I saw a big dragon fly. It was like a long caterpillar with long sparkling transparent wings.

The birds are not like ourn they are light brown.

There were wasps which was yellow and pretty but unkind.

I (aged eleven) saw a little blackbird—its head was off by a Cat. I made a dear little grave and so berreyed it under the Tree.

The flowers, of course, come in for the greatest attention, and after them the trees are most usually referred to :

I (aged nine) know all the flowers that lived in the garden, but not all those who lived in the field.

Stinging nettles are a nuisance to people who have holes in their boots.

The Pond is all covered with Rushes. These had flowers like a rusty poker.

I picked lots of flowers and always brought them home—  
shows the influence of the Selborne Society in teaching children not to pick and throw away what is alive and growing.

The Cuckoo dines on other birds.

There was one bird called the squirrel.

Only gentlemen are allowed to shoot pheasants as they are expensive.

We caught fish in the river some were small others about 2 feet long.

Butterflies don't do much work.

The trunk of the oak is used for constructing furniture, coffins and other expensive objects.

But my readers will be weary, so I will conclude with the pregnant remark of a little prig, who writes :

I think the country was in a good condition for I found plenty of interesting things in it.

One or two of my small correspondents show an early disposition to see faults and remember misfortunes.

'There was no strikes on down there but there was a large number of wasps,' was the reflexion of one evidently conscious of the fly in every ointment. Another (aged ten) writes :

DEAR MADAM,—When I was down in the country I was lying on the couch and a wasp stung me. As I was on the common a man chased me, and I fell head first and legs after into the prickles, and the prickles dug me and hurt me. . . . I was nearly scorched down in the country. . . . One day when I fed the Pigs the great big fat pig bit a lump out of my best pinafore. One morning when I was in bed the little boy brought the cat up and put it on my face. When I was down in the country the Common caught a light for the sun was always too hot. So I must close with my love.

Was there ever such a catalogue of misfortunes compressed into one short fortnight? Still, in the intervals she seems to have noticed a considerable number of trees, of which she makes a list, and adds: 'I did enjoy myself.' Poor little maiden!

Perhaps her elders had graduated in the school of misfortunes, and she had learnt the trick of complaining.

A good many children, both boys and girls, were very conscious of the absence of their home responsibilities.

I did not see a babbi. I mean to mind it all the time.

The ladys girl dont mind the baby as much as me at home. It stops in the garden.

It opens up a whole realm of matters for reflexion: the baby not dragged hither and thither in arms too small and weak for its comfort, and then plumped down on cold or damp stones while its over-burdened nurse snatches a brief game or indulges in a scamper. The clouding of the elder child's life by unremitting responsibilities, and the effortful labour which sometimes wears out love, though not so often as could be expected, so marvellous is human nature, and its capacity for care and tenderness. 'I didnt have to mind no twins,' writes one small boy of nine, 'I think them a neusence. I wish Mother had not bought them.' But the baby left in a garden! opening its blinking eyes to the wonders of sky and flowers and bees and creatures, while its elder brothers and sister do their share of work and play. This makes a foundation of quiet and pleasure on which to build the strenuous days and anxious years of the later life of struggle and effort.

The reiteration of the kindness of the cottage hostesses would be almost wearisome if one's imagination did not go behind it and picture the scenes, the hard-worked country woman accepting the suggestion of a child guest with a lively appreciation of the usefulness of the 5s.'s which were to accrue, but that thought receding as the enjoyment of the town child became infectious, until the value given for the value received became forgotten, and generous self-costing kindnesses were showered profusely.

'My lady she was always doing kind to me.' 'Mrs. P. washed my clothes before I came home to save Mother doing it.' 'My lady told Mr. S. to shake her tree for our apples.' 'The person that Boarded me gave me nice thing to bring back.'

In some cases the thrifty, tidy ways of the country hostesses conveyed their lessons.

'She use to make browan bread and She use to make her own cakes and apple turn overs and eggloes and current cake.' 'The wind came in my room and blew me in the night.' 'We always

had table clothes where I was.' 'I washed myself well my lady liked it.' 'We cleaned our teeth down in the country every morning.'

Sometimes examples on deeper matters were observed and approved of.

'Every morning and dinner and tea we say grace.' 'The lady told us Sunday School was nice and we went.' 'We had Church 3 times. Morning noon and night'—

is not reported with entire approval, but the letter ends:

'I loved my holiday very much and hope that I can go next year to live with the same lady.'

A boy writes:

The lady was very kind she never said any naughty words to me.

And another lad reports:

I was fed extremely well and treated with the best respect.

One little girl had clear views on the proper position of man.

'My ladie,' she writes, 'had a big pig 4 little ones, 2 cats. some hens a bird in a cage a apple tree a little boy and a Huband.'

Sometimes the history of the place has been impressed on the children.

I (aged eleven) was very glad I went to Guildford because Sir Lancelot and Elaine lived there but its name was then Astolat.

When I (aged eleven) reached Burnham Thorp I felt the change of air and I heard the birds sing—and then I knew that I should see the place where our great English sailor Lord Nelson was born,—

he being a character so indissolubly associated with innocent country joys.

The letters both begin and end in a variety of ways, for though I do not always write the letters which are issued to the children by the Countryside Committee of the Children's Country Holiday Fund, it is considered better for me as Chairwoman to sign them, so as to give a more personal tone to the lengthy printed chat, which the teachers themselves open, kindly read and talk about to the children, and a copy of which each child can have if it so wishes. Thus the reply letters are all sent to me, and the vast majority begin 'Dear Madam'; but some are less conventional, and I have those commencing 'Dear Mrs. Barnett,' 'Dear Country Holdday Site Commtie,' 'Dear

friend,' 'Dear Miss,' while the feeling of personal relation was evidently so real to one small boy that he began his epistle with 'Dear Henrietta'—I delight in that letter! Among the concluding words are the following: 'Your affectionate little friend,' 'Your loving pupil,' 'From one who enjoyed,' 'Yours gratefully,' 'Yours truly Friend.'

Some of the regrets at leaving the country are very touching:

'I wish I was in the country now.' 'I shall never go again; I am too old now.' 'I think in the fortnight I had more treats than ever before in all my life.' 'The blacking berries were red then and small. They will be black now and big.' 'I wish I was with my lady's baker taking the bread round.' 'I enjoyed myself very much, I cannot explain how much. Please God next year I will come again. As I sit at school I always imagine myself roaming in the fields and watching the golden corn, and when I think of it it makes me cry.'

And those tears will find companions in some of the hearts which ache for the joyless lives of our town children, weighted by responsibilities, crippled by poverty, robbed of their birth-right of innocent fun. The ecstatic joy of children in response to such simple pleasures tells volumes about their drab existence, their appreciation of adequate food, their warm recognition of kindness, represent privation and surprise. In a deeper sense than Wordsworth used it, 'Their gratitude has left me mourning.'

I know, and no one better, the countless servants of the people who are toiling to relieve the sorrows of the poor and their children, but until the conditions of labour, of education, and of housing are fearlessly faced and radically dealt with, their labour can only be palliative and their efforts barren of the best fruit; but articles, as well as holidays, must finish, and so I will conclude by another extract:

We had a bottle of Tea and cake and it was 132 $\frac{3}{4}$  miles. I saw all sorts of things and come to Waterloo Station and thank you very much.

HENRIETTA O. BARNETT.

### GODFREY SYKES.

SUMMONED by Thackeray, in the year 1860, to discuss contributions for a projected magazine, George Augustus Sala was permitted a glimpse, as he has told us, of the 'marvellously clever design (drawn by a Mr. Sikes, if I am not mistaken) for the cover of this new venture, which was to be called the CORNHILL MAGAZINE.' 'Sikes,' whose name, thirty-four years later, Sala could remember but with uncertainty, and could spell only approximately, was Godfrey Sykes, and the circumstance that the artist made no deep impression upon the memory of this old lion of the 'Daily Telegraph' is significant of his comparative obscurity, even at that time, thirty-six years of age, and with only half a dozen more years remaining to him in this world. Sala saw Godfrey Sykes at the CORNHILL dinner that was organised to herald the joyous sowing of the corn, when in the chair sat Thackeray, the first editor, surrounded by many who occupied already, or who were soon to occupy, the highest places in the world of art and letters: Richard Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton), Leighton, Millais, Browning, Trollope, Landseer, Fred Walker and others of less note; yet Sala does not describe the proceedings at the dinner, and it may be that there is no account of it in existence, but there are those alive still who tell of the company becoming hilarious, and of Godfrey Sykes recounting, in the Sheffield dialect, a droll local tale of a man with many waistcoats.

The opportunity to design the CORNHILL cover came to Godfrey Sykes through Thackeray's old friend Henry Cole, knighted in 1875, in those days the moving spirit at the South Kensington Museum, and when the drawing arrived at the office, and Mr. George Smith, the proprietor of CORNHILL, showed it to the editor, Thackeray exclaimed 'What a lovely design! I hope you have given the man a good cheque for it.' Mr. Smith himself wrote to the artist saying 'We are very much delighted with the beautiful drawing you have made for us, and I hope you will find that Mr. Linton has done justice to it.' Lady Ritchie, Thackeray's daughter, remembers that a design for the cover had been made already, but that it was put aside unhesi-



tatingly, as soon as the sketch from Godfrey Sykes appeared; and when a proof of Linton's wood-cut was sent to Thackeray, he wrote 'What a fine engraving! What a beautiful drawing! There has been nothing so ornamentally good done anywhere that I know of.' Both the drawing and a proof from Linton's wood-block are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Mr. Smith used to say that the only complaint ever made against the design in his days was that the sower is sowing with his left hand, but just after this criticism was uttered, Mr. Smith, staying in the country, saw a man sowing with his left hand, and he has told us that 'Of course I made the most of the circumstance.' Quite a long controversy raged round this point in 'Notes and Queries' so recently as the year 1910, but perhaps in this, as in many discussions, there has been a tendency to proceed too rapidly from a particular instance to a general principle, without regard to local or to individual peculiarities, and in any case the disputants were not aware of the comments which the artist himself has made upon the design. In a fragment of a letter, without date, which is still preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Godfrey Sykes has written ' . . . I have had much talk with him'—(Thackeray)—'and some bacco and it is equally true that I shall catch it for what I have drawn and imagined for that cover. I had four agricultural pictures to draw, for which I found one little sketch I have made from nature, the other three I invented. I was so horridly unwell I could not go to forage up examples, and if I have not proved my ignorance and contempt for the works of the field I shall be amazed. Now don't wait until I am ill again before you write, let me have a stave soon.'

An endorsement, by another hand, upon this too modest letter runs: 'As it turned out, the sower was the only one objected to by the critics—and that was the only one drawn from Nature—a sower in a cornfield at Heeley.' Those who know Heeley may recall that in this district a sower casts the seed with each hand alternately, left, right, left, right, all down the furrows, so that, after all, Godfrey Sykes's picturesque sower has agricultural as well as artistic sanction for what he has been doing during the last fifty years. Controversy, however, is far from being the only manifestation which these folk upon the CORNHILL cover have induced, especially as some of us pored

over them in our childhood, and so became attached to them; and since, have they not drawn a poem from Thomas Hardy, who dwells upon them, as Keats dwelt upon the figures that graced his Grecian urn?

Heeley, where Sykes found his model for the sower, has been absorbed by Sheffield now, and so close was the connexion of the Sykes family with Sheffield that it has been stated more than once that Godfrey Sykes was a native of the town; but the truth is that, though he was born in Yorkshire, it was further north, at Malton. A tradition has survived that in the part of the parish churchyard of Sheffield which was cut away in order that Church Street might be widened, there stood a row of gravestones, spoken of familiarly as the seven Godfreys, keeping alive the memory of seven Godfrey Sykeses, who had followed one another in direct descent. The earliest known ancestor of Godfrey Sykes lived at Calver in Derbyshire, and the artist's father was a traveller for Francis Newton, of Portobello, Sheffield.

In early life Godfrey Sykes worked for Messrs. Bell and Tomkin, engravers, of Sheffield, and afterwards he followed this occupation upon his own account. His first work seems to have been, as some have written, the engraving of a manufacturer's show-card, but his sister says that his early designs were reproduced chiefly by lithography. This card was followed by designs for salvers, tea and coffee pots and for other plated goods, principally for Mr. Edward Atkin, and for stoves for other manufacturers; but relief from this kind of work came in the painting of the interiors of workshops, mills, and forges, and in sketching expeditions in the beautiful country that lay almost at his very door. During this period, he painted the Rembrandt-like subject of a night watchman at the scene of some road-mending operations, sitting in his little hut, in the light of his lantern. Sometimes, too, he designed architectural details and mosaics, and one of the more ambitious projects that he worked out on paper was for a pair of doors in bronze, intended for the Sheffield School of Art, but never executed for that institution.

The pictures in oil and in water-colours that he left indicate his favourite sketching grounds around Sheffield. He painted Endcliffe Woods, and other scenes in the valley of the river Porter. Often he was about Highfield and Heeley, both places rural and beautiful in his days, and in the charming valley of the river Sheaf, especially about Little London Dam, at that time, before the railway came, a wide sheet of water with lovely

surroundings. One of his pictures is of Heeley Wood, and further east he has a scene upon the Don, near Rotherham. Sometimes he went into Derbyshire, expeditions which yielded views of Hathersage, Burbage Brook, Win Hill, Glossop Hall, and Haddon Hall. Even the streets of Sheffield found him work, and so we have St. Paul's Church from Union Street, and another aspect of the same building from a different point of view.

Some of these pictures are still in Sheffield, two of them at Norton Hall. One of Sykes's beautiful sketches, *The Pond, Meersbrook Park*, painted in 1858, is a scene quite near to a spot where stood the charming home of a pupil of Ingres, Mr. Young Mitchell, where Sykes from time to time met the great Alfred Stevens, then, like Godfrey Sykes, at work in Sheffield designing goods to be produced in the local manufactories. Some of Stevens's Sheffield designs, in which Sykes assisted, formed a memorable feature of the Exhibition of 1851. At this time Mr. Young Mitchell was the Head Master of the Sheffield School of Art, and his daughter, Mrs. Frank Saltfleet, of Sheffield, still treasures Sykes's beautiful water-colour drawing of the Meersbrook Pond. A son of Mr. Mitchell, the Rev. F. G. Mitchell, vicar of Wendy, in Hertfordshire, has an inkpot designed by Godfrey Sykes, and presented to Mr. Young Mitchell during his connexion with the Sheffield school.

Godfrey Sykes was a visitor also at Fieldhead, the residence of Mr. Richard Solly, a house that has been demolished since, though its memory is perpetuated in Fieldhead Road, and its principal features are depicted in a lithograph of 1850. Mr. Arthur Wightman, who was a boy at the time, remembers to have seen him there at a dinner party, and he was impressed by the length of the artist's hair. At Fieldhead, Sykes decorated a number of the rooms, and when the house was destroyed, Mr. Wightman, whose father was secretary of the Sheffield School of Art when Sykes was there, preserved some of these decorations and presented them to the school. There was saved also, from the wreck of this house, the design by Godfrey Sykes upon the staircase ceiling, *The Three Fates*, and the artist's sister has some of the original sketches for the decorative work at Fieldhead. Mr. Charles Green, a Sheffield artist who was a pupil in the local School of Art when Sykes was there, made an appeal that all the decorative work at Fieldhead should be saved,

but this praiseworthy intervention was disregarded. He managed, however, to save a portrait of Alfred Stevens and this is still in his possession. One of the mantel-pieces in the house was by Stevens. Charles Dickens called to see a friend at Fieldhead during the year 1858. Other houses that Godfrey Sykes adorned were those of Sir John Brown and Mr. William Fisher, before Mr. Fisher, a very good friend of the Sykes family, went to live at Norton Grange. For Mr. Fisher, Godfrey Sykes modelled a lamp pillar in bronze, and at Mr. Fisher's death this went to the Sheffield School of Art. During the same period, Sykes and William Ellis modelled a figure, life-size, to represent Sheffield and to stand in the centre of the Sheffield Court at the Crystal Palace. Mr. Green has tried to find what became of this figure, but without success, and another quest in which he has engaged has been for a painting of Minerva which Godfrey Sykes executed for the Sheffield Mechanics' Institution frieze, a design of a procession of figures representing the Sheffield handicrafts that hangs now at the Mappin Art Gallery.

The young artist won many valuable prizes at the School of Art, and it is manifest from the designs and paintings he has left behind belonging to this period that Godfrey Sykes worked hard during his Sheffield days; but all his hours were not given to study, and Sheffield people still alive remember his delight in Fifth of November bonfires, and we know that one of the artist's favourite recreations was the making and flying of immense kites. He was also an enthusiastic and accomplished skater, a sport for which Sheffield in those days offered many opportunities.

If Godfrey Sykes had remained in Sheffield, he would have been in a place that had artistic traditions, and an artistic future; but it happened that at this time there were æsthetic stirrings in London, and, endowed as he was, it was only natural that these should draw him into their vortex. Upon the night that he was to leave Sheffield for London he was still teaching in the School of Art. While he was correcting the work of a pupil, Harry Hems, now of Exeter, a sculptor well known in this country and abroad, the bell sounded for the closing of the school. There was a small gathering, Godfrey Sykes was presented with a silver crayon-holder, regrets at this severance were expressed on both sides, and a little later the artist was on his way to London. As his work there was such as to demand

that he should have a staff of assistants, he took some of these from Sheffield, including his talented friends Gamble and Townroe, and amongst other helpers was Mr. Lockwood Kipling, whose son Rudyard, then unborn, has since made the name of Kipling famous.

To Godfrey Sykes were allotted first the decorations for the buildings of the Royal Horticultural Society, since removed, and afterwards the decorations for the older part of the present Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington, buildings designed by Captain Francis Fowke, of the Royal Engineers. Sykes's work abounds in the south court, and in the restaurant, and most of us who wander about this part of the great museum find ourselves, sooner or later, in the quadrangle, a quiet enclosure in the heart of the buildings, a kind of cloistral retreat from the noise of the streets, where we may seek refuge alike from the piercing winds of winter, or from the torrid heat of summer, as we saunter under trees, refresh our eyes with the green of the lawns, and listen to the musical plashing of the central fountain. It is there that we are in the midst of souvenirs of Godfrey Sykes, and if we have come out from the refreshment room, we have come past his portrait, in medallion form, and through his great bronze doors. In the quadrangle itself we have on every side the work of his hands and brain. Surmounting this block of buildings, and seen best from the windows of the Art Library opposite, is a long range of open iron work, that stands between us and the northern sky, and bears upon it the name of Godfrey Sykes. At a much lower level, but still above our heads, and also upon the northern side, looms his greatest achievement, a group of columns which, according to a writer in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' in 1866, 'for style and size are worthy of being placed on the Certosa at Pavia, or in the Hospital at Milan.'

During their association at South Kensington, Captain Fowke, the architect, and Godfrey Sykes, the designer of ornament, became much attached to each other. When Captain Fowke was arranging the Guards' ball in the picture galleries of the Exhibition of 1862, Godfrey Sykes, whose lungs were now affected, was too weak to mount the steps, so Captain Fowke carried him to the room in his arms. Yet Sykes, frail as he was, outlived his friend; but less than three months after the remains of Captain Fowke had been laid in Brompton Cemetery, a vault in the same burying ground received those also of Godfrey

Sykes, for he died, only forty-one years of age, on February 28, 1866, at 2 Rich Terrace, Old Brompton, just as the workmen were fixing the capitals upon his last achievement, his famous highly decorated terra-cotta columns that grace the northern boundary of the quadrangle, at the South Kensington Museum. During the time that this work had been progressing, he had endured much pain and weakness, but when he could scarcely breathe he was drawn up to the scaffold with ropes, that he might give his last directions to his pupils and to his workmen, and sometimes he had been borne up the ladder upon the back of Captain Fowke.

There is an element of the unexpected, as well as of the pathetic, in the early death of Godfrey Sykes. He came of vigorous ancestors, and he has left vigorous descendants. He had also at times enjoyed good health and spirits, a great zest for life, and the Gamble portrait gives the impression of a man robust and virile. His brother George died but two years ago; his sister, who was devoted to him, is still alive. At the time of his death two circumstances were talked about as having been likely to bring about the end. Morning after morning, when he went into his studio, he found that the leaves and sprays which he had modelled upon his South Kensington columns had fallen off, and, to prevent this, he worked during many hours in an atmosphere that was both very wet and very warm. Then he went to skate upon the Serpentine, and before he came away such a dense fog descended upon London that he was utterly lost, and so was exposed to the cold for some hours after his vigorous exercise upon the ice, until he found a link boy who could conduct him home.

His early death has caused us to take a sombre view of the life of Godfrey Sykes, but it would be a mistake to suppose that his career, though it was short, was gloomy also. We have seen him revel in the Sheffield bonfires and in kite-flying and skating; we know that he contributed some of the comic element at the CORNHILL dinner, and Sir Henry Cole has testified to the artist's genial temperament. At home he indulged often in boy-like romps, and used to play a mad game of cricket in the hall with a bundle of tied-up rags for a ball, and part of a broomstick for a bat. His delight when he hit the ball into the back kitchen was shown in most uproarious behaviour. On one occasion, when this kitchen was ruled by a lugubrious servant, he said that what she needed was to be cheered up, and



so he painted two laughing faces which were hung in her domain.

One joke, in which Godfrey Sykes, Charles Dickens and others participated, centred round a hearth-rug that hung in a second-hand shop. Each member of this circle entered into friendly rivalry to see who could beat down the dealer's price lower than the others. If they had known, however, the result was a foregone conclusion, for was not Sykes a Yorkshireman, a Hallamshire blade who could cut more keenly than they! So it came about that after a hard struggle the rug found its way, as it was bound to do, to the hearth of the man who had come from Sheffield.

Let us hope that the rug carried colours that commended themselves to his fastidious taste, for, like most other artists, Godfrey Sykes sought to bring his home surroundings into harmony with his own notions of fitness and beauty; and, anticipating William Morris, he designed even his own wall-paper. His house in Rich Terrace, since demolished, became a centre at which art and letters met, and Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, who went to see him often at the Museum, visited him there too, to watch his progress with the South Kensington decorations. At that time the artist's children were quite young, and these, as usual, received many attentions from her Majesty. This fondness for children survived to the end, and many will recall that in the very last years of her reign Queen Victoria shed tears as she listened to the singing of the children in the Norfolk Park at Sheffield. Prince Albert frequently took the tools and worked upon the designs himself, staying in the studio at the Museum until the Queen came to accompany him back home. Frederic Leighton, afterwards Lord Leighton, called often at Rich Terrace, and the Godfrey Sykes of our own day remembers receiving his first picture-book from his hands, a collection of nursery rhymes. Seymour Haden, the eminent etcher, was the family physician, and generally he too had something in his capacious pockets for the little ones. William James Linton, the distinguished wood-engraver, artist and author, the engraver of the CORNHILL cover, and his wife, Mrs. Lynn Linton, novelist and 'Saturday Review' writer, called often upon Godfrey Sykes, and still another frequent visitor was Henry Cole, a jovial man, particularly fond of children, so that his visits also were looked for eagerly by the younger members of the family.



Godfrey Sykes applied the artistic standard even to the naming of his sons. He owed it to a long line of ancestors to perpetuate the name Godfrey, and yet he did not think that the initials G.S. formed a satisfactory monogram; but, by pressing his grandmother's name into the service he derived Godfrey Glenton Sykes, and a monogram that was quite satisfactory. The name of his second son, Stanley Sykes, had to pass this artistic scrutiny too before it could receive his final approbation. Moreover, as in the human face symmetry is obtained by having all the single features upon the middle line, the nose, the mouth, the chin; and all features that are in pairs disposed one upon each side, like the eyes and the ears, he insisted, with unanswerable logic, that the division of the hair should be in the middle, and so his own hair and that of his boys showed its parting along the centre line.

There can be no doubt that Godfrey Sykes learned much from his association with Alfred Stevens, the designer of the Wellington monument in St. Paul's Cathedral; but his most obvious bent was towards the manner of Michael Angelo and of Raphael, whose works he saw during a visit that he and Mrs. Sykes paid to Italy in the winter of 1861-2. Beautiful, full-length figures, the portraits of these artists, were prepared by him for the south court at the Victoria and Albert Museum; but for some reason a figure of Raphael by Moody was set up in place of the one by Godfrey Sykes, though Sykes's Michael Angelo is still in position. Work of a different kind, but perhaps as congenial, was his design in terra-cotta of a monument, erected after Sykes's death, in the cemetery at Kensal Green, over the grave of kindly old Mulready, most lovable man, most charming artist.

We have seen that Godfrey Sykes, though not born in Sheffield, spent some important early years there, and Sheffield gladly adopted him as her own. Indeed, though there are no monuments in the city to distinguished natives like Sir Sterndale Bennett, Thomas Creswick, R.A., and Joseph Hunter, F.S.A., yet Godfrey Sykes, who goes unmemorialised at Malton, where he was born, has been honoured in Sheffield with a monument that will remind posterity of his achievements. Three of the portals through which we pass into Weston Park are from his designs in terra-cotta, and, occupying a prominent place in the park itself, is his monument. Its principal feature is a replica of one of his famous South Kensington columns, standing on a

square base, and surmounted by a copper-gilt vase. Upon one side of the base is a copy of Gamble's medallion portrait, and another side shows the materials and tools of the artist's craft, arranged in a design which may be seen also upon the back of the monument to the artist in Brompton cemetery. Upon the two remaining sides of the base are inscriptions which give a few particulars of his life.

Of the portraits of Godfrey Sykes the copper-gilt medallion at the Victoria and Albert Museum, repeated upon the Sheffield monument, was the latest that was modelled. This portrait, which the son of Godfrey Sykes says is an excellent likeness, was wrought by Mr. James Gamble, one of the artists whom Godfrey Sykes brought from Sheffield to South Kensington. The portrait had been in progress while Godfrey Sykes was still alive, but the finishing touches had to be applied during the time that the artist lay dead. In the refreshment room at South Kensington, and in a passage above the refreshment room, are some decorative letters of the alphabet, arranged round pillars. These were designed by Godfrey Sykes, and his own portrait appears in association with the letter I and also with the letter A (for artist). They are back views, for one of his ideas was that people's backs are very expressive and ought not to be neglected.

Another most engaging portrait of Godfrey Sykes is a photograph on glass, taken probably in the late 'fifties of the nineteenth century. It belonged to Mr. Young Mitchell, and it is now a cherished possession of his daughter, Miss Jessie Mitchell, of Sheffield. The expression is refined and intense, and there is that touch of the woman that is seen so often in the faces of artists and of poets. The later portraits reveal that as he grew older his face became more virile, and vigour is the characteristic of all his descendants, every one of whom has now his home in America. Concerning these no more need be said in this article than that the name Godfrey Sykes, which has descended from remote ancestors, is not likely to become extinct, for the artist's son, Godfrey, an explorer, has two robust sons, one of whom is Godfrey, and the other son of the artist, Mr. Stanley Sykes, is the father of another couple of sturdy boys, so that there are alive to-day six descendants of the artist, two of whom bear a name which the readers of this magazine have reason to hold always in honour and in affection.

HAROLD ARMITAGE.

## ON THE THRESHOLD OF RUSSIA.

BY THE HON. EDWARD CADOGAN.

IN the month of January during the present year it was my good fortune to accompany the British Deputation that visited, by special invitation, the towns of St. Petersburg and Moscow. On this account it has been suggested to me that I should endeavour to convey some of the general impressions which were created in my mind upon a first acquaintance with the Russian people. To record such impressions, or even to form definite impressions at all, after so brief and superficial an experience as my own, is not altogether an easy undertaking. For I have stood merely, as it were, upon the threshold of Russia. I have caught but a fleeting glimpse of what others have studied long and laboriously. To compose any treatise, therefore, however abstract, upon so comprehensive a theme, with no other first-hand knowledge to assist me than it has hitherto fallen to my lot to acquire, seems on the face of it as futile a proceeding as that of a literary critic endeavouring to review a book after merely glancing at the cover. I can only plead as an extenuating circumstance for my presumption the fact that the exceptional advantages which were afforded to the British Deputation of seeing, under the most favourable conditions, all that was most worth seeing, of meeting with all the men of light and leading who were most worth meeting with, and of making the very best profit out of every crowded moment of our visit confer upon me some feasible justification for recording my first impressions, and these advantages may possibly invest them with a rather higher value than they would have possessed had we visited St. Petersburg and Moscow in our private capacities.

The average Englishman knows Russia but little. To the majority of our countrymen this vast Northern Empire which occupies the greater portion of the civilised world is *terra incognita*; and if, therefore, the British Deputation had set forth with no higher purpose than to break through the cloud of ignorance which obscures the minds of Englishmen with regard to all matters Russian, its mission would not have altogether

proved in vain. Speaking from a personal point of view, the fruit of my experience, during this instructive visit, is a conviction that everything within the range of possibility should be accomplished to make English and Russians more intimately acquainted. There are many reciprocal advantages to be acquired by the mutual intercourse of the two peoples whose respective national characteristics eminently fit them to co-operate for the benefit of humanity. With this great end in view, there can be no obstacle to a closer union than has hitherto existed, saving the well-nigh insuperable difficulty which each nation experiences in learning the language of the other. The unprecedented cordiality of our welcome from all quarters, from all classes, and from all parties, from the Tsar down to the humblest of his subjects, was an earnest of that ardent desire on the part of the Russian nation to inaugurate a better understanding between the two great Empires, an understanding which should operate not merely as an artificial defensive alliance in times of storm and stress, but to the mutual profit of both countries in good and evil report. This enthusiasm which was so conspicuous on the Russian side during the whole period of our memorable sojourn, has generated in our hearts a determination to know Russia better, and therefore I confidently expect to be pardoned if I cherish a pious hope that the following recorded impressions, however meagre, may create in the minds of some the ambition that I now experience of becoming more closely acquainted with a people whose sympathies and aspirations so nearly approximate our own.

Perhaps to the newcomer, the most noticeable feature in the daily lives of the Russian people is the potent influence which religion seems to exercise upon thought and action, and which seems to permeate existence in every class and every profession. The moment that the foreigner sets foot upon Russian soil, the intensity of religious feeling, and the large part it plays in the career of every individual, high and low, at once forces itself upon the attention. This phenomenon can be remarked at the very entrance-gate of the Russian Empire. In the frontier station, the waiting-room seems to be rather consecrated to a religious purpose than to that with which it is usually associated. From one of the walls, above an altar-like structure, hangs a sacred ikon ornate with precious metal, illumined with a dim mysterious light which completes the illusion that the

traveller is standing upon holy ground. It is to be imagined that the very last moment during which the ordinary mortal would be likely to exhibit any concern for his spiritual welfare is when engaged upon the peculiarly mundane occupation of registering his luggage; but to the Russian it is otherwise. In all things, however insignificant, Heaven's light must be his guide. No place and no time is inappropriate for religious meditation or devotion. Herein lies the peculiar merit of their piety and, I may add, its superiority over that of other European peoples. The average Englishman keeps his religion, if he boasts of any at all, in a water-tight compartment. He preserves his earthly concerns intact from its influence, and refuses to allow it to interfere noticeably with either his pleasures or his duties. The Russian point of view, in this respect, is much more logical. The peculiar function of religion, he argues, must be to exercise its restraining influence at any time and in any place; and this circumstance constitutes an explanation of the fact that, however incongruous the surroundings, in every room, to whatever purpose it may be devoted, be it a foyer of a theatre, a station booking-office, a restaurant; be it in cottage, palace, or barrack, sacred emblems are always the first objects to meet the eye.

There is an intense and convincing reality about the Greek Church, without which its elaborate ritual might be deemed purely meretricious. In the Russian cathedrals, what in those of other denominations is dross and tinsel is massive and genuine metal. It might almost be said that here everything that glitters is of purest gold, and although the outward and visible costliness of the material appurtenances may not necessarily be a guarantee of its intrinsic spiritual value, these concrete symbols convey to the senses an effect of stability and power. I do not profess a deep knowledge of the Greek Church. I know nothing of the Orthodox priesthood. I am ignorant of their relations with the laity. I do not know if there is oppression and extortion; I can only witness to what I saw and heard, and, on the strength of my observations, I will deliver myself fearlessly of the generalisation that the conspicuous piety of the Russian people is a national asset, both in its influence upon the private conduct of the individual and in the dignity it confers upon civil life, and I believe that a strange mistake will be made if an iconoclastic generation, steeped in the philosophy of Hegel and of Tolstoi, deeming

religious observance archaic, shall be suffered to render unto Caesar the things which are God's.

Along with this religious trait in the Russian character can be detected by the most casual observer another national characteristic which many English writers have noticed and dwelt upon. The Russian manner of thinking seems to be influenced by a certain careless fatalism which, in the upper classes and the town populations, takes the form of an optimistic cheerfulness under adverse circumstances, and, among the peasant classes in the country, a morose submission to an inevitable destiny. This habit of mind can best find expression in the homely phrase that 'nothing very much matters.' If your *troika* is upset and you are precipitated head-first into the snow, it was fated that this should happen from the beginning of things. If you make a business appointment at 9 o'clock in the morning and your client oversleeps himself until midday, this is predestination, and the consequences must look after themselves. Time is not a question of money as it is supposed to be with us. It is a question of fate. But I cannot help thinking that this notable characteristic, along with many others, will be profoundly modified by the new political conditions under which the country is initiating its Constitutional career. An omnipotent and irresponsible autocracy could have been possible only where the subjects of a Sovereign trusted blindly in an irrevocable fate; where they were content to attribute all things, good and bad, to the settled and unalterable decrees of a remorseless Providence. But now that the people have become ambitious to control their own destiny, the days of careless fatalism, of unquestioned submission to authority, are at an end.

The recent change in the form of government is effecting a distinct metamorphosis in the constitution of the national character; and it is for this reason, if for no other, that the phase of Russian life which affords most fruitful material for reflexion is the political.

The staple topic of conversation among the educated classes is very naturally the Constitutional question, and the future prospects of the new form of Government. It was our privilege to be shown the working of the new Parliamentary machine and to converse freely with those best qualified to enlighten us upon its merits and defects. The English Deputation paid a formal visit to the Imperial Council and to the Duma in session.



The latter bears very little superficial resemblance to the House of Commons, either in its structure or its composition. The building, which accommodates the representatives of the Russian people, is the famous Tauris Palace, the erstwhile home of Catherine's favourite Potemkine. The rooms are majestic in proportion, but their decoration and style would be more appropriate to the purposes for which they were originally intended than to those for which they are at present employed. The Lobby is obviously a ballroom, with its rows of stately Corinthian columns, its galleries, and its handsome chandeliers. The Senate Room, where the Duma sits, still preserves its ancient character of a reception-hall, where once courtiers strutted and swung their canes, and the whole edifice is reminiscent of an epoch which those now assembled within its walls are intent upon obliterating from the minds of their countrymen.

On the day of our visit we were accommodated with special seats in order to witness a debate. The contrast between the Russian and the British Parliament House was evident at a preliminary glance. There is lacking that peculiar fitness which so characterises the architecture of the House of Commons. The room is dazzling white, lit with countless electric globes of great brilliance, a brilliance which seemed to be somewhat antipathetic to the sober dignity with which the proceedings are habitually conducted. The President, an imposing figure, sits on a high throne, with a bell at his side to preserve order, beneath a gaily coloured portrait of the Emperor with the suggestive background of a clear blue sky. Immediately below him is the tribune from which deputies deliver their orations, occupied, at the period of our visit, by an Orthodox priest declaiming in stentorian tones. Facing the President, rising tier upon tier, divided by two aisles, are the seats of the deputies, forming a vast horseshoe after the fashion of the classic amphitheatre. It is doubtless this peculiar disposition of seats which results in the existence of so many and various parties, and accounts for the circumstance that these parties melt almost imperceptibly into one another. I have always been led to suppose that the psychological reason which has caused English parties to be divided up into only two main classifications is the geographical arrangement of the House of Commons. The fact that the Government and Opposition sit face to face admits of practically no compromise whatever, but when opponents are not actually



set over against one another, reconciliation is an easier process. This may, or may not, be a scientific fact, but there can be little doubt that in Russia the number of parties and their affinity to one another is at first sight very bewildering to the student of Russian politics. I was told that there are no less than eleven main classifications—the Extreme Right, the Right, the Nationalists, the Moderate Rights, the Octobrists, the Poles, the Mussulmans, the Peaceful Reformers, the Constitutional Democrats, the Labour Group, and the Social Democrats. The statesman who is unable to reconcile his own views with any of the above selection must be of a fastidious turn of mind.

As I gazed down that afternoon upon the historic scene, I could not help meditating upon the vast responsibilities resting with this Assembly who have undertaken the regeneration of Russia—the grave and fundamental problems, financial, agrarian, and constitutional, that have yet to be faced and solved before their countrymen can move steadily along the path of progress and reform.

Although it was difficult to grasp the precise aspirations and ideals of the various political divisions, I was led to believe, after discussion with several of the most prominent politicians, that in all probability the future rests with moderate men, from whatever party they may be drawn. The first and second Duma failed, according to the best authorities, owing to the impetuosity of the reforming zealots who believed they could cure all ills of state with violent remedies. My very brief study of Russian politics gives me no sort of right to dogmatise, but the general opinion seems to be that the ultimate solution of the issue will be found in the prevalence of moderate counsels. It is difficult to believe that anything solid or lasting will come of Russia's Constitutional experiment unless extreme methods, either on the one side or the other, are avoided. No substantial or enduring reform can be effected by violence, from whatever quarter violence may emanate. Russia can no more be governed by the knout of the Cossack than by the bomb of the Nihilist. We in England have learnt the lesson that civil confusion is no antidote to arbitrary power, and that autocracy is no longer an efficient instrument to deal with anarchy. It is only by moderation and patience that the safety, honour, and welfare of a nation are secured.

For healthy and steady growth time is an essential. The

tree of the Constitution, still a sapling in Russia, must necessarily mature by slow degrees. Doubtless it could be forced by artificial methods, but its fruits would be neither tasteful nor wholesome. Let it strike its roots deep and wide into good rich soil by that steady and natural process which can alone ensure its strength and durability.

Russia in her revolution has much to be proud of, but also much to fear; and her danger lies, it seems to me, in an excess of those very qualities of which she has a right to be proud. The zeal of her reforming energy, laudable as it is, may become too strong for her and upset her balance.

In Russia the students seem to play a prominent and influential part in the political life of their country, and it is just from this quarter that the consequences of too much zeal are most to be feared. However, if the younger generation, the generation upon which rests the responsibility of carrying to perfection the work so ably initiated by their forerunners, can learn patience and moderation, the future should be secure. But can it be said that the youth of Russia are profiting by experience? I saw something of young Russia. The most interesting function it was my privilege to attend was our reception at the Moscow University. I shall never forget the scene of enthusiasm as we passed into the great entrance-hall and wended our way up the grand staircase through a surging sea of human beings cheering to the echo. The whole of the broad landing was congested with an enthusiastic crowd of students in their picturesque military uniform. It was indeed a moving sight when we mounted the rostrum of the lecture-hall and faced these hundreds of the youth of Russia. It was easy to discern in their faces, as they listened with rapt attention to the speeches of their guests, all the virtues of youth—generosity, earnestness, patriotism, and eagerness to be up and doing. Here was presented to us the younger generation, upon whose shoulders rests the future destiny of this mighty Empire, her glory or her abasement.

The students in the universities of Russia are doubtless suffering from the same distemper which afflicts those of similar institutions in other countries—the distemper of youth—the same indiscretion, the same impulsiveness, the same spirit of iconoclasm, the same inability to distinguish energy from rashness. They are passing through what has been appropriately

called the 'pardonable period of life.' It is the same here as elsewhere; but in Russia, it strikes me, where undue hastiness may prejudice the advantages so laboriously acquired, it is a more serious element to be reckoned with. Let the rising generation bear in mind Burke's teaching that the restraints on men as well as their liberties are to be reckoned among their rights.

There have been dark moments in the history of Moscow University. It is difficult to believe that only a few years ago several of its youthful members met an untimely death in a political cause upon a public square in Moscow. Such things must rankle now; but let the students of Moscow remember that it is by patience and moderation that they will win more fruitful victories than by turbulence and revolt. In quietness and determination lies their strength.

They ran to the door, these friendly students, as we left the building, with cries of 'Long live England, free England, free England!' laying all the emphasis upon the cherished adjective. The students of Russia should recollect how England won her freedom—not in the twinkling of an eye, not by sensational victories, which deprive the victors of as much as they gain, but by the far more gradual process of accumulating and profiting by the experience of successive centuries, and building the solid structure of her Constitution upon the basis of that experience.

It is a bold venture in so short a space to have even touched upon so vast a problem as the internal Russian political situation, and it seems still more presumptuous to attempt to describe the main features of her principal towns. Space only allows me to record the vaguest, and therefore the least valuable, impression. St. Petersburg, whatever may be the minor faults of architectural detail, is a magnificent city. It is all the more impressive because it is the monument which commemorates a mighty battle—one of the many battles in that ceaseless war which has lasted ever since man has peopled this world, the battle waged between man and nature. In this instance, has man prevailed in the conflict? Certainly there never was a more hopelessly inappropriate site for the capital of a great industrial nation; and yet, to judge from outward appearances, man seems to have scored a lasting triumph. Nature, on her side, claims an indemnity in the shape of a heavy death-roll of its citizens, for, whatever other disadvantages may have been

obviated by human ingenuity, some expedient to render a naturally unhealthy situation salubrious has yet to be contrived. But, from an æsthetic point of view, the site has one conspicuous merit. No town in the world can boast such a river as the Neva. I do not know its width at the broadest point; guide-books provide such details to satisfy the curiosity of the statistician. I can only say that when, for the first time, my sledge swept round the angle of the Nevski Prospect on to the snow-covered quay, the *coup d'œil* far exceeded in beauty any previously conceived picture of my imagination. The panorama which meets the eye at this point of vantage is superb. Away to the right, in seemingly endless perspective, stretches the colossal Winter Palace. Across the ice-bound water the horizon is filled in with the domes and towers of the graceful Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul. The morning sun suffused a pink glow over the whole view and, with its slanting rays, caught the tall thin spire of the fortress of the further side, turning it into a sword of flame. Here, before me, in all its matchless grandeur, was the great conception of a great Emperor, a worthy tribute to his determination that upon an uncongenial swamp should arise one of the noblest cities in the world.

Everything in St. Petersburg is erected upon a monumental scale, and, in this respect, although its architecture may not be superior, it compares favourably with our own metropolis. After the Crimean War, we erected to our heroes' memory a somewhat unworthy figure in bronze, which some critics are of the opinion would shame the memory of a minor poet. To commemorate the triumphs of 1812 and the sons who shed their blood on behalf of their native land, St. Petersburg throws aloft a vast temple and colonnade almost comparable with that of Bernini in Rome. The architecture and the proportion of the streets, appropriately enough, suggest a sense of majesty and power.

Moscow presents a striking contrast to St. Petersburg. To the ordinary tourist Moscow is the Kremlin, and the Kremlin is Moscow; and rightly so, for here is concentrated its treasure, its beauty, its history, and its religion. But to describe the Kremlin is a waste of ingenuity. It is not to be described—it must be seen. There were several among our party who had travelled far in many lands, and they all agreed it was one of the few much-vaunted wonders of the world that not only

fulfilled but surpassed expectation. In their estimation they gave the first place to the Taj Mahal, and the second to the Kremlin. Personally, I have not seen the Taj, so, for the present, the Kremlin is enshrined in my memory as the most peerless of man's creations. I spent some pleasant hours, all too brief, wandering through its palaces, its courts, and its cathedrals. The student of history here finds much upon which to feast his imagination; here in the Kremlin, with its memories of Ivan the Terrible, and of one more terrible than he, one more murderous, more responsible for the waste of human life, and the cause of far more human misery.

But if to see the Kremlin at close quarters is ravishing, to see it from a distance is something beyond the descriptive powers of man. I drove one evening out into the country, up to a slight eminence, known as the Sparrow Hill, and, from this point of vantage, I saw the fairest sight it has ever been my pleasure to gaze upon. We reached the summit of the incline just as the sun was throwing out its last golden rays upon the landscape. The cold was intense, but the rarefied atmosphere lent an added glory to the scene. At our feet stretched a vast plain of snow, and out of the waste arose the Kremlin, 'instinct with loveliness, not architecture, not masonry.' A mist obscured the surrounding city, so that the gorgeous fortress seemed to be suspended in mid-air, like Aladdin's palace, the creation of an entrancing dream, the graceful phantom of a vanished age.

Certainly the snow enhances the beauty of what is beautiful in Russia. Nature in this respect embellishes the work of man, but those who visit Russia have to pay dearly in material discomfort for the aesthetic advantages of its atmosphere and climate. The natural cold is intense, and, as a consequence, the artificial heat of the houses in Russia is proportionately overpowering. Every room is heated to suffocation, and English devotees of fresh air will find the absence of this element not easy to endure. The Russian theory is that a man should get thoroughly warm before venturing into the open, and that he should be thoroughly thawed the moment that he comes in from the freezing atmosphere outside. I have no doubt that this is a correct prescription. I have noticed that Russians seem to eat a great deal, and that they do not seem to suffer from over-indulgence as we do. The reason of this difference seems to me that if an Englishman over-eats himself he throws open the

window, catches a cold, and injures his liver. The Russian is content to remain in his hot room, and trust to the process of evaporation to counteract the effects of his indulgence. But, apart from this consideration, I do not believe that any man could live in Russia during the winter so long as he pinned his faith to our fresh-air principles. How Russians take exercise during the period of extreme cold I fail to understand. Perhaps they rely exclusively upon the invigorating effects of a country drive. I can answer as to the efficacy of this expedient for recuperating the jaded appetite. I know no more exhilarating sensation than driving in a sledge across the snow-clad plains. The pleasing experience fell to our lot on several occasions during our train journeys, when a halt was called at a wayside station and we were allowed the relaxation of a sledge drive through the early morning air.

Buckle, in his 'History of Civilisation,' attaches immense importance to the effects of climate upon temperament, and consequently upon national characteristics. In Russia they seem to be contradictory, for this severe climate certainly has generated warm hearts, and, more incongruous still, musical and artistic talents in an eminent degree. These characteristics are generally associated with hot sun and brilliant natural colouring. But no one who has visited Russia could come away without the impression that, in all musical and artistic accomplishments, the Russians are remarkably efficient. They positively excel in dancing; and this excellence is to be observed not only upon the boards of the Opera House, where a beneficent Government watches over and pays for the instruction of the dancers—although there, of course, we see the terpsichorean art brought to the highest pitch of perfection—but dancing might almost be said to be a national sport with all classes in Russia. I was much amused, on one occasion, while being entertained by the Household Cavalry, when a troop of the regiment was brought into the ante-room, after mess, to sing their national songs and dance their national dances. Right well they acquitted themselves! I could not help smiling to myself when I tried to imagine, in similar circumstances, a troop of the First Life Guards being made to dance before their officers in Knightsbridge Barracks; but 'other men, other manners'—comparisons are absurd as well as being odious.

In all classes, dancing is an accomplishment, and if they

excel in dancing, the Russian singing is a thing to be dreamt of. While at St. Petersburg we were privileged to hear a concert of the Court Choir—perhaps the finest choir of voices in the world. There is something tragic and weird in the singing of the Russian people, which seems, nevertheless, to be typical and characteristic of the land which gave them birth. And these features add to its overwhelming charm. To hear such a band of voices chanting the famous National Anthem is an experience alone worth a visit to Russia.

Although of not so long standing as their school of music, their school of art is of a high order. We were afforded a most interesting demonstration of the development of Russian painting in the Tretjakovsky Gallery. Up till quite recently, unlike, in this respect, their very original music, their art was purely imitative. For centuries it continued mere plagiarism. Here in this gallery, and ranged in chronological order, illustrating the genesis of Russian painting, hangs a series of pictures by artists obviously inspired by Romney, Hoppner, Greuze, and Turner. Their efforts seem mere reflexions of the great Masters in other lands. But then suddenly comes the same aspiration as we see in their politics—the desire to be free. Russian art has shaken off its bonds, and has struck out a line of its own; and, be it said to its credit, that this line is original without being *outré*. The fads and whims of the modern French and Italian schools have not spread their contagion northward. The modern landscapes are wonderfully beautiful and intensely realistic, and I believe that, if only it can steer clear of the fantastic vagaries which have defiled the modern school of painting in Europe, there is a great future in store for Russian art.

I have tried thus to render in as few paragraphs as possible some of the impressions I have carried away with me from Russia. The main impression left upon my mind is that there is so much to reflect upon and so much to get profit out of, even in the most fleeting visit to Russia, that it is impossible to confine a description of these principles into the limited space of an essay. Members of the English Deputation will remember, so long as life lasts, with feelings of the sincerest gratitude, the memorable days spent as the guests of the Russian people, and they carry back with them to England a message of peace and goodwill.



We have much to learn from the Russians. We are bold enough to think that they have something to learn from us. In re-casting their Constitution they have done England the honour of taking her Constitution as one of their models. But this is not to be interpreted as meaning that they will readily brook interference from us in their domestic concerns. An artist may admire the form and outline of his model without wishing to be dictated to by his model upon the principles of his art.

I observed that on several of the public occasions at which I was present the speakers referred to Russia as a young country. They prefer, it appears, to be called a young country. They wish to obliterate the past; they glory in the feeling that they have been, as it were, rejuvenated—born again to a new youth which shall profit by the knowledge of the failures and faults of a previous existence.

The fact is that Russia has been held back, held in check while other nations have been allowed to advance; and now, in the breaking of her bondage, she wishes to attain her ends free from the artificial restraints and restrictions which have hitherto handicapped her efforts in the cause of peaceful progress and reform. That she will attain those ends none can doubt if the controllers of her destiny temper their reforming zeal with a wise moderation; if they will bear in mind that excess invariably produces reaction, and that the accumulated evils of centuries are not to be eradicated in a single day.

*THE RETURN FROM VARENNES: AS SEEN  
BY AN ENGLISH GIRL.*

[In February we printed as a pendant to Sir James Yoxall's vision of January 21, 1793, in the Temple, a contemporary description of Cléry, the well-remembered valet of Louis XVI. To-day there comes into the editorial ken a still more curious record of an adventure which happened to a young English girl, Miss Mercy, who chanced to see the King and Queen brought back to the Tuileries after the flight to Varennes. The Editor could not deny his readers the picturesque story which was told, at the age of seventy-seven (in the year 1842), by the heroine of the adventure to the late Mrs. William Sturge, of Bristol, from the hand of whose daughter it comes, this strange link with the past.—ED. CORNHILL.]

AN English lady who resided in Paris for two years during the French Revolution, in the family of one of the Royalist party, the major to the Comte d'Artois, gives the following particulars connected with the return of the King and Queen after their unfortunate attempt to fly, in which they were stopped at Varennes and brought back as prisoners to the capital, which, for the sake of convenience, I shall relate in the third person, though the facts are scrupulously adhered to, and are as she related them to us herself—she being the actor in the whole scene; and although she had completed her seventy-seventh year on the day preceding, she detailed the story with all the brightness and vivacity of a young person and with much of the French sprightliness of manner acquired during her residence with that people.

Miss M. had arrived in Paris three days after the taking of the Bastille, and as she had witnessed most of the remarkable scenes that had taken place during the time she had resided there, she determined to make the effort to see the King and Queen on their return. She asked one of her friends to accompany her, but without effect, and then a second and even a third, but as they belonged to the aristocratic party they all declined, not daring to venture out; on which she resolved to

go alone, trusting to her being an Englishwoman to preserve her, for the British had not then fallen under the suspicion of the French Government.

She was young and had considerable courage and presence of mind, and therefore set forth fearlessly on her bold project, dressed in the beaver hat so prevalent at that time in England, and wearing a long orange scarf folded about her in a manner then customary. Thus equipped, she pursued her way towards the Tuileries, where an immense mob were collected in expectation of the arrival of the Royal party; and these, with the courtesy inherent in the French people, made way for an English lady to pass to the gate of the palace gardens. A cry having been raised that the party had already arrived, many of the crowd went away, but Miss M., having reason to believe it a mere stratagem to disperse the assembly, pressed on through all difficulties and presented herself before the sentry who kept guard, and who at once refused her admittance. But she replied :

‘ My good sir ! you surely cannot refuse to admit an Englishwoman, who has come here on purpose to see your fine revolution, and who admires your principles and liberty,’ adding the popular cry of ‘ Vive la Révolution ! à bas la Bastille ! ’ on which the soldier immediately drew back, saying :

‘ A la bonne heure ! bonne citoyenne ! Allons ! ’ and she passed on.

There were many in the Tuileries Garden, but Miss M., desirous of obtaining the best situation for seeing the cavalcade, proceeded to a broad grass plot, round which some hundreds of dragoons were loitering about, ready to form and close round the carriage of the King and receive it on its entry to the palace.

She wandered carelessly on, gazing hither and thither, and thoughtless of any danger into which she might run, when the approach of the cortège was announced by the terrific shouts of execration that passed along the crowd, and the dragoons were ordered to muster and form. It was then that she found herself alone, on foot, amidst the soldiers, who were now rapidly closing their ranks and reining their horses side by side preparatory to moving forward. They were to proceed at full gallop to the palace, and there, drawn up in line, await the carriages which were slowly coming on. The word was given for them to ‘ make ready ’ and ‘ form,’ and they were awaiting the final

orders to march, during which Miss M. had entirely given herself up to die, when a soldier near her observed her situation, and, with true and genuine kindness, devised the means of her escape, exclaiming: 'Mademoiselle, prenez vite la queue de mon cheval, ou vous êtes perdue!' She immediately wound the tail of the animal round her hand in such a manner as to prevent his kicking, and they were all momentarily expecting the word of command, when the dragoon, recollecting himself, suddenly exclaimed to her: 'Donnez moi la main.' In an instant she flung back the tail of the horse, and gave him her hand, which he seized fast in his, as his arm hung low and motionless by the side of his tall charger. The order was at that moment given, 'Away!' and off flew the horses, with Miss M. in the midst of them, borne impetuously along by their speed, but safe from all danger as she danced along; her deliverer held her fast, and at every leap of the steed she bounded high in the air, only touching the ground with her toes at such intervals as were allowed her as he descended. Her long orange scarf became partly loosened by the action, and floated far away over her head, which caused loud shouts from the spectators, who cried: 'Bravo! Bravo! la petite Anglaise! Bonne Citoyenne!' &c. In this manner she pursued her mad career, until they arrived opposite the terrace of the palace, where they must draw up, and where the soldier and she must part; therefore, watching his opportunity as they wheeled into line under the wall of the terrace, he threw her lightly up it, and, exclaiming 'Maintenant, prenez garde à vous. Vite, vite!' was gone, while she stood, wondering and confused at the extraordinary deliverance she had experienced.

During the progress of this remarkable scène, she had never lost her presence of mind, and so light and rapid was her flight that she declared it to be one of the pleasantest rides she had ever had. The soldier who thus preserved her remained entirely unknown to her, and has doubtless sunk to his last sleep long ago, but she will never cease to feel deep gratitude to her deliverer, who thus protected her, a stranger and a woman, from a dreadful and violent death.

When the sentinel on the terrace perceived a lady so suddenly and marvellously transplanted there, he accosted her and exclaimed: 'Comment, Madame! est-ce que vous êtes venue ici? Par miracle?' 'Par miracle,' said Miss M., and the guard,

probably thinking that he could not interfere with a person who had come on to the terrace by a miracle, made way for her, with the word 'Allons!' Miss M. then proceeded, and stationed herself near the entrance to the palace, towards which the unfortunate Royal party were approaching. At a slow, almost funeral, pace came the three carriages which contained the unhappy monarchs and their suite; the Swiss Guards who had remained faithful and had accompanied them being chained by two's to each coach-box, with their heads bowed nearly to their knees, and almost dead with fatigue and apprehension. The dragoons closed round the whole, and the wretched King and Queen were prisoners to their own people.

And now the first carriage stopped before the palace door, and a captain of the guard advanced to receive the Queen as she alighted, pale and beautiful as marble, but undismayed and full of dignity amidst the dreadful excitement around. As she descended, the officer, touched by her beauty and majestic demeanour, said gently to her, 'Madame, je vous prie de ne pas avoir peur,' on which she turned towards him, and replied, with sweetness and firmness: 'Monsieur, je vous prie de croire que je n'en ai point.' Then, disappearing from the crowd, she was lost for ever to the world.

The King followed from the same carriage, contrasting strongly, by his hurried and blustering manner, with the mild and fearless aspect of Marie Antoinette, and calling out as he stepped on, 'Qu'est-ce que faire?' betraying by his words and actions the terror of his mind. They were followed by their two sweet children—the Dauphin and Mademoiselle, now the Duchesse d'Angoulême, and by Mme. Elisabeth, the King's amiable sister, accompanied by the rest of their suite.

What followed is for the pages of history to unfold. It is only the personal narrative that we have tried to relate, as being one full of wonder and interest, connected as it is with the proceedings of that awful and eventful time.

HELEN M. STURGE.

### GRANNY RYALL'S REMEMBERINGS.

'MEM'RY, why that's just about the only thing I've got left. It's a true word, sure 'nough, "twice a child and once a woman," and 'ere I be as 'elpless as a babe; but when it comes to memb'rings I reckon I can be even with most on 'em. So all the great ladies 'ave taken to writin' 'em down, 'ave they? Well, well, we be all poor mortals and no mistake; but you jest come along and I'll do as much o' that as ever you wants. It's all I've got to do the long day through as I lays 'ere, but them old days do come back as plain as ever was, they do.'

Granny Ryall was seventy-eight and bedridden, hopelessly crippled with rheumatism, but her mind was as clear and her tongue as sharp as ever. She lived alone with her grandson Stephen, and the absolute devotion of that man to the frail old body amounted to a very practical form of heroism. He earned a rather precarious living with a barrow in the mussel line, though he condescended to winkles, or ascended to jellied eels, according to the season and the state of his finances. Occasionally it was salted herrings, but I was never sure what place they took in the social scale.

It happened to be herrings on the very first day that I kept my promise and went round to Granny, and they proved to be disconcerting beyond measure. I knew that Stephen was out directly I got within sight of the house, for the paper wedge was in the door, which meant that 'them as knowed' could shove it open from the outside. No sooner had I done this, than something cold and slimy swished across my face, for I had walked straight into a string of herrings hanging across the dark passage. Never before did I realise how many herrings could come out of one barrel; the passage was full, and Granny's room was fuller; they hung in strings from the backs of every chair, and from the table-legs to the knobs of the chest of drawers; then again at a higher level straight across the room from convenient picture-nails. They had evidently been put through a process of washing, and were not yet dry, for a drop glistened at the forked tip of every tail, and the least movement sent them raining down in showers to swell the puddles on the floor. A low winter sun was slanting in across the room, turning every drop it touched into

a diamond, and the moist scaly strings of fish into shimmering lines of rainbow and silver; but half the room was left in shadow, and there the rows were grey and lustreless. Granny was in the darkest corner of all, and her voice sounded unusually chastened.

'Lor', miss! but I ain't 'arf glad you've come. I was jest a-thinking as 'ow I'd pray for a angel from 'eaven to come down and open me winder. I reckon, though, you can do it better than 'im, seeing as you knows the ways of the place. That's the tumbler, dearie, the one with the piece out; but it does well enough for propping the bottom open, and it'll 'ave to last my time, though it's seen its best days, it 'as, like the rest of us.'

The way to the window was comparatively clear—at least at a low level—and I propped up the window, and got the only available chair settled beside Granny, at the price of one sharp shower of drops.

'They do take a bit of getting used to, they do; but whether it's 'errings or other things, there ain't nothing as folks can't get used to livin' with. It's not as though I were born to such things neither, for they brought me up in the country. I'm one of them as *were* very scarce o' parents. My father died o' small-pox, nockerlated and all 'e was, but he got what they calls the master pock in 'is left eye, and that finished 'im; then my mother she died, so her old father jest came and took me 'ome long o' him right down Ashford way, and I lived there a tidy time.

'Spoilt me? Well, yes, I reckon 'e spoilt me, but I'll tell you the truth, and that is that I'd a deal sooner 'ave been a child in them days, than I would now. Why, they're that edicated and 'spected and looked arter, they hain't no time to larn to look arter themselves nor nothink else. When I was a young 'un we never thought much o' school, we jest went to school by dribs and drabs, and come a day with the sun a-shining and the larks singing, off I'd be to the fields and the dykes. I'd be a-playin' out there, till the old church clock started "Oh dear, what can the matter be?" (it always played that o' weekdays, an' 'ymns Sundays), then I runned off all I knowed to meet my Grandad coming 'ome to dinner. I use to meet 'im all innocent like, and 'e'd say, "Well, Jane Anne, and what you been hup to?" and I'd say, "Nothin', Grandad; I ain't been hup to nothin'." Then 'e'd laugh and say, "Soldier's crime again, Jane Anne."



'You don't know what soldier's crime is? Well I never year'd a better bit nor that; why, it's what we always says when folks gets up to mischief, and then swears all simple like they hain't done nothin'; that's what soldier's crime is, right 'nough.'

The sun had almost set by now; only one low shaft of red light was striking across the corner of the room. A breeze was coming through the window, and the long strings of silvery fish were swaying gently. The shadows in the corners were deepening; and as the old voice grew tired and then stopped I sat quietly on, thinking Granny was asleep; but I was mistaken—her mind was only wandering in that far-away sunshiny past, and just for a moment the present with its shadows was forgotten.

She began again suddenly—almost fiercely:

'If you think as we didn't larn nothin' in them days, you're jest mistook, for we larned a deal o' the sort of stuff what's worth knowin'. I remember well 'nough being four year old, and my Grandad says, "Now, Jane Anne," 'e says, "you be four years and gettin' on for a woman." So 'e stands me up on a chair, 'longside one o' them old cupboard things (you know the sort, dearie—shiny browny wood, with little bits o' yaller wood put in), and 'e shows me how to polish, round and round, and 'e says, "Elbow-grease, Jane Anne—there's nothin' but elbow-grease will do it, so you jest shine that up for me to shave in come marning." It were 'bout that same time as my Granny started me on washing the handkerchers; and she seed I did it proper too, she did, for I can 'most 'ear 'er saying, "There ain't nothin' like showing the childer the right way o' doing things." I've thought o' that time and time agen, I have.

'Well, dearie, if you must be going, jest take the tumbler out and drop the winder, and you needn't worry over leavin' me alone in the dark, for it be what I've 'ad to get used to same as 'errings. Stephen will be along soon; my Stephen always come, he do.'

At that moment the door was pushed open, and a blue-gerseyed figure loomed up in the dusk. He looked uncannily tall, as he stood there peering over a string of herrings; then, catching sight of me in the corner, he instantly began to apologise for the state of his place. Stephen and I were old friends, and the comfortable way in which he established himself against the door-post not only indicated his intentions regarding conversation, but effectually barred my way of escape.

'You see, miss, 'ow it is. Mussels is hout! Leastways

'cepting for them folks as buys North Dutch; but you wouldn't never be 'aving me do such a thing as that. Why not? Well, I did think as everybody knowed *that*! It's the South Dutch as is the white and creamy ones, beautiful to look at on the barrer they are, for sure, but *North* Dutch—why, they runs red and yaller. They don't please the eye, they don't; and you mark my words—the heye's the palate, and what we sees we tastes.

'Now, miss, you jest take the tip from me, and when it comes to feeding, and you wants yer mussels to thrive, you give 'em brine and oatmeal. Not too much brine, for it makes 'em fret so—real fret they do, nobody wouldn't ever believe it; but there, I don't suppose as there's one pusson in ten thousand as knows what determination there is in a mussel—by which I means to say the character they 'ave.'

Granny was asleep; the room was in darkness except for the glimmering light of the window; Stephen was invisible, but his voice sounded as though it was wound up to go for ever. A pause came at last, and I hastily groped my way towards liberty *via* the mangle. We met in the doorway.

'No, indeed, Stephen,' I answered, 'I never knew anything at all about the determination of a mussel before.'

I fumbled desperately for the latch of the street-door, and for once Stephen forgot his manners and did not help. I heard him begin again:

'Now, jellied eels, they've another very perticular secret——'

But I had found the latch at last, and was well on my way down Rosemary Lane.

## II.

It was always rather a pilgrimage to get to Granny Ryall, for she lived right away down by the docks, in an old house in Rosemary Lane. It was not the lane that presented the difficulties, but the street that led to it, for it was so very long and cobbly, and from start to finish it never ran straight for twenty consecutive yards. Sometimes it had a little bit of pavement, but not often, and the wayfarers' path was beset with dangers, for the street was so narrow and the carts were so many and big. All along one side were the high warehouses bordering on the wharf, and from the topmost storeys of these were forever hurtling gigantic sacks and bundles and cases; and though, because Providence is good and the ropes held, they landed safely in the

waiting waggons, yet the traveller would slither hastily past, nervously ducking his head, and clinging only to the hope that his Guardian Angel would prove equal to his duties.

The house was one of the few remaining wooden ones, and Granny herself described it and its contents (including herself) as having seen their best days and being all of a piece. The walls were black and so was the ceiling, and the plaster was hanging in a large and ominous bubble, exactly over the head of the bed. I remonstrated in vain, the invariable reply was: 'Reckon it will last my time.' This onerous duty of lasting was imposed not only on the bubbly ceiling and the cordless window with its cracked tumbler, but on all the other contents of the room; and the only thing I ever knew to fail in its obligations was the old black kettle. The new one looked most offensively glaring, till the chimney saved the situation by smoking continuously for forty-eight hours, at the end of which time the patchwork kettle-holder felt at home once more, and Stephen received a sharp lesson in 'chimbley-sweeping' from his grandmother. The art of patchwork had been much cultivated by Granny in her younger days. The basin always stood on a patchwork mat, and the best ornaments and tumblers on the chest of drawers; each reigned supreme on a small island made of scraps of purple and magenta, scarlet and yellow silk, with connecting chains of faded pale-blue feather-stitching. They were old and dirty now, but she loved them dearly, for to her mind they established a certain standard of gentility.

The next time I visited Granny Ryall I found the old lady alone as usual, and the place swept and garnished, with never a sign of a mussel, much less a herring.

'Yes, dearie, the pain were very bad through the night; but that's the weather, and we can't 'elp it, as I says to Stephen. I shouldn't 'ardly know as I was alive if it weren't for a bit o' pain.

'Well, I never! What queer questions you do ask, to be sure! How do you reckon that the likes o' me were ever going to come across them sort of people? You must go to the great ladies and their 'membrings for that, though maybe none of 'em couldn't tell you as much as me about the King of the Gypsies; and maybe they hain't all wrote letters to Queen Victorie, and got what they wanted, same as me.

'No, I can't exactly say as I ever saw the King of the Gypsies,

but 'e were my grandfather's father, and that do take yer back a tidy time. My old grandad 'e did set and tell me tales by the hour, 'e did, 'bout old Bob Hughes. He were born out in the carrywans, was my grandad—lovely carrywans they was, two on 'em painted up so as there weren't none to touch 'em. Soon as 'e could eat they fed him on roasted hedge'og; oh, 'e used to say there weren't nothing to equal a young hedge'og for sweetness. Make a 'ole in the ground, they would, and pop 'im in under the hot wood-ash, and it didn't take many minutes 'fore the skin and pricks would come off, and time 'e was done 'e tasted a deal sweeter even than other folks' chicken, 'e did. What Bob Hughes were proudest of all 'bout was his clothes. Knee-brechies, coat, and waistcoat all made o' cow'ide. The waistcoat 'ad the 'airy side out, and the other 'ad the 'airy side in (be sure you don't forget that bit), and for buttons there was four spade-guineas!

'Course I'm sure of it: *course* I knows what spade-guineas be: 'ow should I be tellin' you if I didn't know? You can laugh if you like, but it's true, cow'ide and buttons and guineas and all—it's the truth, it is!'

The laughing doubts that I had expressed regarding the value of Bob Hughes' buttons were a sad mistake, for nothing would induce the old lady to return to the subject. I was contemplating an ignominious retreat in disgrace, when a series of thundering thumps and bangs began on the street door.

'Reckon that's 'Orace, my littlest grandson.'

I went out to see. Horace's method of knocking was original and effective, for he was stretched full-length on the pavement, joyously swinging his legs and kicking the door with his heels. When at last I saw him right-side up, he turned out to be a podgy, grimy, jolly boy of about four; his elbows, knees, toes, and other portions of his anatomy were all out, and his mother had evidently given up the task of mending in despair.

'Wants Uncle Stephen,' he remarked.

I intimated that his wishes could not be realised just at present, but nevertheless he continued his way into the house.

'Wants a farding.'

'What for?'

'Quarter o' throwouts.'

I turned inquiringly to his grandmother.

'That's just like the childer nowadays; wantin' farthings is all they're good for. Throwouts? Oh, they're just all the

broken bits o' sweets, the sort o' sweepin's up, as you might say, and they sells 'em for a penny a pound down at the shop. When I were a child we couldn't get none o' that trash—why, when I were down at Ashford——'

But at this moment there was another resounding thud, and 'Orace was again creating a diversion. He had clambered into a chair, and hauled one of the largest stones out of the depths of the mangle; failing in his efforts to balance it on the edge, it had come crashing down on to the floor, where Horace and the chair quickly joined it in a confused heap. Whatever Granny's opinion of the modern child may be, he certainly takes life philosophically—bumps and all. Horace righted himself again, and with unruffled calm picked up his weighty treasure and staggered out into the street, doubtless feeling that his call had not been paid in vain.

I had never realised before that the internal anatomy of a mangle required the presence of rocks, and the ignorance I displayed regarding the necessity of weight to a Baker's Patent very nearly sent me into disgrace for the second time. However, Granny magnanimously allowed that it were very old-fashioned, and you don't often see a Baker's Patent nowadays, though it would be a deal better for the mangling if you did.

'As for young 'Orace,' she continued, 'e do be the very moral of 'is father, and no mistake. It were 'is father as I took and wrote to Queen Victorie 'bout. When 'e were a boy of sixteen 'e got took up one night, 'e did. I can't tell you much 'bout it; but 'e was took up unlawful, 'e was, and they shut 'im up in one o' them places what's almost like a prison, but not quite, and there 'e was to bide three year.

'My 'usband 'e took on somethin' crule; but I says "That ain't going to get 'im out," I says; "there's only one person as can 'elp, and I be going to write to 'er." Lor, miss! What a job that was, for I ain't much of a scholard, as you knows; but I jest put me 'eart into it, I did. How did I begin? Oh, the beginning weren't the 'ard part, for I put Her Dear Majesty; then I goes on and says as 'ow 'e was took unlawful and put away for three year, and then I tells 'er a bit more 'bout things, and then I puts at the end would she be so very kind as to 'elp 'er obedient and lovin' subjec' Mrs. Jane Anne Ryall.

'The answer comed back in two days, with Buckingham Palace on the paper and all, and it were written by the proper lady what

writes for the Queen. It said as 'ow 'er Majesty regretted it was not in 'er power to hinterfere, but I were to go and call at some place and tell the gentlemen all about it. Lor'! What a lot of questions they asked, and then they kep' all on coming down to my place, and asking a lot more—but I got me boy back 'fore the end of a month—so *there!*'

The end was unexpectedly triumphant. Granny's good-humour was entirely restored and she chuckled softly to herself.

'My! How the neighbours did come round lookin' and talkin'; but I says, "It ain't no manner o' good *your* writing, for thievin's different, so's drinkin', but *my* boy were took unlawful 'e were, and what's the Queen a settin' on 'er throne for but to see as 'ow Justice is Justice?'"'

The red shaft from the setting sun was once more slanting across the corner and the familiar room was growing dusk and shadowy.

'Good-bye, dearie,' murmured Granny, 'if you won't be waiting while Stephen comes.' But, remembering those unfinished hints on jellied eels, I departed whilst yet the way of escape was clear.

MARJORY HARDCASTLE.

*BIRDS OF A SUSSEX GARDEN.*

You may know the Sabbath Day, in this garden, by the bullfinches. The connexion is not obvious, but a brief exposition makes it clear. The bullfinches, as all who live in a fruit-growing district know to their heavy cost, are singularly destructive by reason of an insatiable appetite for the fruit buds. Fruit buds are not the whole of their diet, even in the early spring of the year, when they begin their attacks most fiercely. They love the cherry, the gooseberry, and many others of the trees and shrubs which give us pleasant fruit, but they much like a change to a meal of lilac buds, and for that the gardener will join in his rage against them with the fruit-grower.

Those who are versed in the science of which Sherlock Holmes is well reputed the great master may perhaps infer something of the country in which this garden lies wherein the bullfinches congregate so largely on a day of rest. In the first place, their presence indicates that it is the day on which the gardeners are not busy in this particular garden, with its little orchard—the whole of the policies are scarcely more than five acres in extent—but it indicates also that it is situate in a land of many small holdings of its kind, of which the owners, unlike my gardeners, are about and busy—busy enough, at all events, to scare away the bud-eaters—on the Sunday. It lies, in fact, on the edge of that Ashdown Forest which still bears its original wild growth of heather and bracken and gorse and birches. On the neighbouring holdings the small farm, as a rule, is not enough to occupy the whole business of the owner, though he has his common rights and avails himself of them to keep some cows and sheep, and he puts in much of his time away from home, working for a wage. On the Sunday he rests from the wage-earning, so he is about his farm and hunts away his bullfinches, which resort to my trees as a very safe sanctuary on this first day of the week.

The holding, as explained, is only a little above five acres, and that small space has to accommodate, besides the house itself, with stabling, some small farm-buildings, greenhouse, and potting-shed, &c., and two cottages; so that when I came to add



up the list of the different birds that I have observed on it during a residence of fourteen years I was quite startled by the number of the species, and almost afraid to set it down to be read—no less than eighty-three. I asked a person of the ordinary ignorance about birds how many species he supposed that a list thus compiled would hold, and he replied, thinking he stated a liberal figure, thirty. I am not sure that, had I been asked the same question, I should not, before doing the sum, have made a very like guess. And yet, looking the list through, it is seen that there is not a bird there that it is surprising to find. On the other hand, there are one or two species—four, to be exact—which it surprises me never to have seen there. And I ought to say at once that, in making the list, I have been, in one sense, liberal to my garden. In a different sense, I have been rather jealously exclusive. I have tried to give it the benefit of no doubt, when there was doubt; but I have interpreted the title of 'birds of a garden' to include all that have been seen from it or heard from it. Surely that is permitted. If the swifts go whirling and screaming all round my chimneys many hours of many a summer's day, surely I may claim them, though I have never actually seen one come to rest within my small boundaries. Of birds heard, but not seen, I have but one to name—a sad omission and a singular—the nightingale, and that in a land where every copse about has its choir of these minstrels beyond compare. And, after all, when this deduction is fully made, there are but nineteen abstractions from the full list. All the rest I have actually seen at rest or at perch in this tiny bit of Sussex ground. Here the list is, showing first those kinds which I have observed on the trees or on the ground of the garden and fields: Kestrel and sparrowhawks, barn and tawny owls, rook, magpie, jackdaw, jay, starling, songthrush, field-fare, missel-thrush, blackbird, nightjar, red-backed shrike, swallow, house-martin, cuckoo, wryneck, woodpigeon, turtle-dove, pheasant, partridge, red-legged partridge, cornerake, woodcock, snipe, green woodpecker, nuthatch, tree-creeper, great tit, blue tit, marsh tit, coal tit, long-tailed tit, golden-crested wren, common wren, skylark, woodlark, meadow pipit, tree pipit, robin, red-start, hawfinch, bullfinch, greenfinch, chaffinch, house-sparrow, linnet, siskin, lesser redpoll, hedge-sparrow, garden warbler, chiffchaff, willow warbler, lesser white-throat, blackcap, wheatear, whinchat, grey wagtail, pied wagtail,

spotted flycatcher, yellowhammer, corn bunting—sixty-four in all.

Of birds seen from the garden, either at rest in the forest or in flight, are the following: Montagu's harrier, hobby, wild duck, teal, golden plover, lapwing, heron, common gull, swift, sand-martin, dabchick, kingfisher, water-rail, Dartford warbler, stonechat, reed bunting, brambling, and grasshopper warbler—that is to say, eighteen species, completing, with the unseen but delightfully heard nightingale, a total of eighty-three.

To this list I might, if I chose to give myself the privilege of my reasonable doubts, make an addition of some half-dozen. Thus I have a strong suspicion of seeing the stockdove, but he was at a distance, and I could not be sure that he was not one of the Continental wood-pigeons, a little smaller than our own, and a little darker, which pay us such unwelcome winter visits. The gulls that I have seen may be of other species besides the common gull which I have been able to identify. I have a suspicion of the yellow wagtail, but he is difficult to distinguish, without a glass, from the grey, and as for some of the warbler kind, those which are hardly to be discriminated unless one can see the exact line and hue of the light streak about the eye, they are hopeless for the sight of middle-age, and all I could do with these was to record them in the strictest spirit of truth and conservatism. Similarly of the tree-sparrow: I suppose it more likely than not that I have seen specimens of its kind here, but they are so difficult to distinguish from the house-sparrow, and the house-sparrow has so many variations of his own plumage, some of which bring him very near the pattern of his tree cousin, that I could not speak to the rarer kind with any confidence. It is probable that, of the many apparent rooks cawing and passing overhead, one or other has been a crow, but here again the identification was too difficult. A string of birds, flying over in the form of a ragged V, and put down as wild duck, may quite likely have been widgeon, but I could not be certain.

So there is reason to think that the list might be lengthened by an addition or two and still be within the bounds of truth. But the record, such as it is, will reveal at once to the ornithological eye the sort of country in which this patch of Sussex ground is placed. There are birds of the heath and of the gorse-bush. Sometimes those of which the wild is the common

habitat will wander off to my cultivated domain. Thus the whinchat has been seen within its small bounds, but the stonechat, though his habits and his habitat are so alike, has not. Probably he has been here times and again, only has always gone before the recording eye could note him. The Dartford warbler is peculiarly a bird of the gorsebush, and he has only been seen from, not in, the garden, flicking a long tail among the furze. There is one bird which it is surprising enough to have seen in this manner, for it is hard to get a sight of him even when you are at the very bush in which you know him to have crept down—the grasshopper warbler—but it so happens that for a year or two, in the summer, a pair frequented a thick jungle of gorse and bracken just outside the garden hedge, and I used to watch them there. The heron I saw on a day when I had in hand a gun for scaring starlings from the cherries. He came over so low, heavily flapping lazy wings, that it would have been impossible not to kill him if I had tried to. He was passing, no doubt, from the river to a piece of water in a wood near by, and I let him go on to his fish-devouring exploits.

But the ornithologist will have made a further inference regarding the character of the country in which this bit of Sussex is laid. The ducks, the gulls, and the herons, even the plovers, are high and far-flying birds—they might be seen anywhere, though they are aquatic, or more or less so—but there are on this list people that indicate the presence of water nearer at hand, in the dabchick and the kingfisher. There is not a pond or one bit of water in the garden itself, but just below it, in the forest land, not twenty yards from the hand-gate, is a pond, no doubt once fashioned for sheep or cattle to drink from. It is fed by a stream from a spring that rises in the valley's fold, a little higher up, and the stream comes oozing or rippling down to fill the pond, and away beyond it to join the Medway, in all except the hottest or driest weeks of summer. One day, looking out over the little gate, I saw the apparition of a turquoise gem balanced on the end of a bare willow rod going out over the water of this little pond. It was a kingfisher, the only one I have seen there, and what his thoughts of the pond were I cannot guess, for it has no fish, even of the smallest, but abundance of newts, both the great newt and the common kind. Also there are water insects innumerable. If these suit the kingfisher's fancy he should have come again, but I am not aware of his

doing so, so perhaps it is fish only that he needs. As for the dabchick, he appeared on a day when all the land was white with snow and all the streams and ponds turgid with its melting. And how he got there is something of a mystery—probably by swimming up the course of the swollen streamlet. No doubt he can fly, though it has never occurred to me, although I have a good deal of acquaintance with dabchicks, to see one on the wing. But many people have seen them in flight—so this little fellow may have flown there at this time when the snow was obliterating all landmarks. He stayed for that day, but was gone again next morning.

It is this streamlet, too, that accounts for such persons on the list as the snipe, which now and then alight in my fields. Yearly a pair nest in the heather or grass at the stream's side, and all the spring they are 'drumming' overhead. They generally bring off their young all safe, and yet the following year there is still but a single pair nesting on that particular stream's course, until it joins the bigger river. The woodcock arrive differently—just an occasional straggler or migrator, though they do nest in the neighbouring woods; but the woodcock, always a queer bird in its ways, has a trick of appearing in the most unlikely places.

The brambling is a bird that I have never seen in the garden itself, but in some big beech-trees just behind it, where it has resorted, in company with a great assemblage of chaffinches and others. It is in the same big trees that the green woodpecker laughs at us and thence comes down now and then to look for insects, especially ants, on the ground. The jays nest there, that raid the pease continually. As for the Montagu's harrier, that big, hawk-like thing I am afraid we shall see no more, though it used often to appear flying high in air. It never seemed to hunt close over the ground, in its usual manner, on this part of the forest—probably there were too many golfers and others; its haunt was over two waves, southward, of the great forest ridges, and it came sailing our way on an occasional prospecting expedition. But we shall not see it again. For one thing, I was very indiscreet in making its presence in the forest known, and finally, last year, all the forest near its old haunt was run over by a great camp of the Territorials—no doubt more necessary to the national welfare than the harrier, but less beautiful.

The siskins pay visits few and far between, always in winter if at all, and in small but very busy companies. The redpolls resemble them in their ways, but are not so uncommon, hanging like acrobats on the extremes of the birch boughs, pecking very industriously all the while.

The country is of the very kind beloved by the cuckoo, for it is rich in the insect life that the heather and the wild grasses support, especially in caterpillars of the 'woolly bear' type, which the cuckoo, alone of all the birds, seems able to digest with any comfort. All the spring day long, and most of the spring night too, he repeats the monotonous dissyllable of his name. The meadow pipit and the wagtail appear to be the birds on which he (or should it be said she?) usually elects to intrude her egg, in this county.

The same reasons which attract the cuckoo doubtless serve to make our land very attractive to the butcher-bird. He will scarcely hide himself when there, any more than the Montagu's harrier. Indeed, you cannot come near his haunt but he will advertise himself by his harsh scold even before you see the handsome chestnut of his back or the delicate pearl grey of his waistcoat. We find his larder and his food set on the thorn skewers often, but I am inclined to agree with Mr. Dewar that not every shrike family, in every year, has its larder. Some, it is almost certain, from the negative evidence that no larder is to be found in the vicinity of their constant haunt, are unthrifty housekeepers, living from day to day on the food that each supplies them.

There are no other birds on the list, I think, that need a special notice. The hobby has been seen going like a dark flash, almost swift-like; the teal and the golden plover high in air; the hawfinch, most elusive of garden-raiders, from the depths of one dark holly to another. But long though the list is, there are one or two species that it is wonderful not to have seen. The redwing, for instance, finds no place on the list; yet this thrush is one of the most common of our winter visitors all the country over. The truth of that matter is that this land of heath and gorse, with fields that are chiefly pastoral, and very little arable, is not of the character that has attractions for the redwing. He seems to like the ploughed lands better, and the sheltered hedges that bound them, where he can find the insect food he wants. And as the redwing is a conspicuous

absentee in winter, so, too, it is a wonder that the larger white-throat has not been seen in summer. It is surprising, too, that a wandering moorhen has never put in an appearance at times when the small streams are flooded. A wattail has been seen—though it is a bird of secret ways and not seen easily—not in, but from, the garden, beside that pond which is answerable for the kingfisher, the dabchick, and also for another bird of the moist places, the reed-bunting. There are many more friends that the ornithologist will miss, though he might have hoped to find them, but perhaps these are the chief and most obvious of the absentees.

As I say, and as is evident, the list is strictly conservative. If benefit had been given for any reasonable doubt, it had been longer by a species or two, but keeping it within the limits that are most safe, is not its length rather astonishing? And no doubt there are several more kinds that have come and gone unnoticed. Is there another country where so small a piece of ground could show so many? I doubt it.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

*THE DARWEESHES OF DAMASCUS.*

II.

I HAD both heard and read more than a little about the Rifa'eeyeh—how they pierced themselves with spikes, cut themselves with swords, ate live coals, and performed other wonders of a like nature. So I made inquiries, and from a Mohammedan friend of mine (the head of the Naksh Bandi order of Darweeshes) I obtained the name of the Sheikh of the Tarekh (or Way) of this particular sect of darweeshes. The Sheikh of the Naksh Bandi, being of the Orthodox Church, was unable to give me a written introduction to the Sheikh of the Rifa'eeyeh, but hinted that I should find little difficulty in seeing a performance provided I was willing to pay the necessary 'backshish.' And so it proved. I saw the Sheikh of the Rifa'eeyeh, and he arranged an exhibition of their powers for my benefit for the following day. I say 'arranged,' because, though these darweeshes—in common with the other orders—give performances at the times of the various festivals, there were none of the latter about to take place soon. If I were to see them, therefore, it was necessary for a special exhibition to be arranged for my benefit, and this procedure, while not so fitting as (so to speak), and more savouring of the mechanical than, an exhibition in the ordinary course of a festival, yet would give me better opportunities for a close observation.

As a witness for corroboration I took with me Mr. Abdul Kahil, a Syrian Christian and my instructor in the Arabic tongue. I may say that I am indebted to Mr. Kahil for details connected with what we saw, which details he noted down at the time.

In the early afternoon we proceeded to the residence of the darweeshes. This was very unlike the pleasant residence of the Molawees, already alluded to, being merely a somewhat dilapidated house situated in a poor quarter of the town. The darweeshes also were not of the same prosperous look as their whirling brethren. They wore no distinctive headdress, save the sheikh, who had on his head a species of woollen cap; their



clothes were not conspicuous for their spickness; they were to all outward appearance the same men of the poorer class whom one might meet any day in the bazaars. In fact I imagine that, unlike the Molaweesh, who were darweeshes pure and simple and lived on endowments and money taken in alms, the Rifa'eeyeh were merely darweeshes in name, ordinary workers with their hands who added to their income by assembling now and then to go through certain performances, and acquired the additional attraction of pseudo-sanctity and mysticism by calling themselves darweeshes.

In the courtyard were present, besides the darweeshes, a large crowd of onlookers, in front of which were placed seats for my instructor and myself. The company of the darweeshes numbered about ten men, who provided the music—if you can call it music—which consisted only in the banging of as many drums and cymbals; about the same number again, who sat in a circle around them, and three or four more on whose 'vile bodies' the reputed marvels were to be carried out. Besides these, and the sheikh to whom I have already alluded, there was the Master of the Way, a very tall fine-looking old man, with spectacles over a pair of piercing greyish-green eyes. He was, in fact, the only dignified-looking figure present. The difference between the sheikh and the Master of the Way appeared to be that the sheikh was the worldly, organising chief, and the Master was the spiritual head.

The performance began by the men with the drums striking them and lifting up their voices in song. Louder and louder grew the chant, not inharmonious for all its wild barbarianness; harsher and harsher clashed the drums, fiercer the swaying of the darweeshes' bodies, and fiercer their faces. It was a strange sight to Western eyes, and a strange sound for Western ears, and the two combined did not leave me unmoved. It is hard to explain, but there is something elemental in the passionate performances of the East, something in their very crudeness, their harshness, their strangeness, which strikes the elemental in the Western onlooker as the hammer strikes the gong, and he feels its vibrations quiver slowly through him. So it was now.

While the din was at its height, the sheikh, with his hands outstretched as if to form a book, went from one to another of the old men present, soliciting their prayers in dumb show, his own lips moving the while. The last to be solicited was the

Master, who took the sheikh's hands in his. Followed the blessing of the instruments—long spikes adorned with brass chains at the end, and a sword—the sheikh passing them through his lips. I noticed that he was particularly careful in his inspection of these, feeling their points and edges, and rejecting two or three which seemed old and rusty.

The preparations were complete; the miracles were about to commence. Three of the darweeshes stripped to the waist, and came forward. The booming of the drums, the deep chanting of the singers, tore the air in a very whirlwind of discord. The sheikh took up a spike. Not being one of those who can look upon supposed horrors unmoved, I had a sudden sick feeling in my stomach. I will describe each item of what followed separately, and as clearly and as shortly as possible; for I believe that the number of Europeans who have seen the self-mutilating darweeshes is somewhat small, and that the number who have written a clear report on what they have witnessed is smaller still. So that this account may set at rest once and for all the discussions (which I have heard from time to time) as to what wonders (so-called) this class of darweesh can or cannot do.

(1) The Master examined the three men, rubbing over their bodies with his hands, seizing their heads and staring into their eyes for perhaps ten seconds. (I offer a suggestion that he may have mesmerised them, wholly or partly.) The sheikh then thrust an iron spike through both cheeks of one of the men; while doing so, he seized the cheeks with his other hand. The spike was inserted very near the mouth, and its point came out at the opposite cheek to the extent of about one-eighth of an inch. This spike was followed by another from the opposite direction, inserted in the same manner. Spikes were then thrust through the lobes of the ears, through the skin on the shoulders, until there were, all told, no fewer than seven spikes in him. The second man was treated in much the same way, except that two spikes were driven through the superfluous fat on his sides just above the hips, coming out behind. The third man was treated in the same manner as the second except that he was pierced with only one spike, on his right side. But this was driven in apparently so much in the centre of his stomach (the slight mark of the hole afterwards was exactly in the centre of his abdomen) that it seemed almost impossible that it could have avoided wounding a vital spot. I noticed, however, that

both the sheikh and the man himself made great efforts in pushing, as it were, the stomach itself over to the (man's) left, so that (apparently) only fat and skin should remain. Notwithstanding this, however, the effect of the darweesh standing there unmoved with the spike driven (seemingly) through his body, was startling, to say the least of it.

The sheikh then removed the spikes, one by one, holding the flesh tightly as he did so. As soon as the spike was withdrawn he licked his finger and placed it on the spot. No blood came forth. Neither of the three men displayed any signs of pain, and I had ample opportunity of judging of this, as of other features, as the whole performance took place at a distance of about four feet in front of me. The three men were again felt over by the Master, who again looked into their eyes, and dismissed them with a puff of breath in the face. They then rejoined their companions as if nothing unusual had occurred.

(2) Red-hot irons were brought in. These five or six of the darweeshes, uttering first loud cries of 'Allah,' which they did indeed before all their feats, proceeded to lick. They did not keep the iron long on their tongues, but merely dabbed it quickly on and off. They also struck the irons quickly on their hands.

(3) A small open stove was brought in, full of live coals. These the Master beat down with his hands five or six times. After this, four of the darweeshes, supported on the shoulders of two of their comrades, stood on the coals in their bare feet for periods varying from five to fifteen seconds, when they were lifted off. The degree of weight which they put on the coals differed, as well as the time of being supported, some seeming to put almost their whole weight, others but lightly touching them. Only one of the four exhibited any signs of pain at this ordeal, and he only for a second on being lifted off. On the other hand, all four of them, on being placed on their feet, walked away without the suspicion of a limp, and joined their companions.

(4) Three or four of the darweeshes ate the live coals, which were now not red hot, spitting out the pieces after. They held the coals in their hands.

(5) An ordinary lamp-chimney of glass was brought in, and was broken up into pieces by the Master. Eight or nine of the darweeshes then put these pieces in their mouth, and proceeded to chew them with apparent enjoyment. After chewing them for some time, one of them opened his mouth for my inspection.

The glass had now become a liquid, and was apparently swallowed by the chewers, as I did not see any of them eject the glass from their mouths.

(6) A darweesh stripped to the waist now stepped forward. The sheikh seized the sword (already alluded to), and after some preliminary flourishes brought it smartly on to the man's stomach, at the same time rushing in behind him and seizing the end of the sword with his left hand. The man also seized the sword with both hands, his elbows bent, and let himself fall forward, until he was bent in two across the sword. The sheikh now swung him off the ground, and turned round with him two or three times. He then stopped, and removed the sword with great caution, licking his finger and running it along the place where the sword had been. There was no sign of blood, the only mark being a line, as if a cord had been drawn tightly round his body. The man showed no signs of pain. The sheikh repeated this performance later on. This time some blood did appear, only it was the Sheikh's. He had somehow cut his finger, which at any rate attested to the sharpness of the weapon.

(7) The sword was placed edge downwards on the man's shoulders, and two men, supported by two others, stood on it. It was impossible in this case to judge of the actual weight borne by the man. It was removed by the same method as before. No blood appeared. The man showed no signs of pain.

(8) The sword was placed edge downwards in the man's mouth, and a darweesh, supported by two other men, stood on the sword. The same remarks—as to weight employed, &c.—which were made above, apply here.

(9) The sword was placed edge downwards on his neck, and a darweesh, supported by two other men, stood on the sword. The same remarks apply, with reference to weight employed, &c., as above.

In items 7, 8, and 9 it should be remarked that the man himself also had both hands on the sword.

(10) A man, seizing a spike, pierced the inner cover of his eye with it, above the eyeball. The spike appeared to go in about half an inch to three-quarters of an inch, though it was impossible to judge with any accuracy.

(11) The same man pierced his throat with a spike, to apparently the same depth.

The performance had now lasted an hour, and since I was

feeling somewhat unpleasantly sick, and had acquired enough data to judge fully of their merits (any further items would merely have been a repetition of those already seen), I told the darweeshes that they could cease from their labours.

I have purposely withheld any comments on what I saw up to now, so that the reader might be free to form his own opinion. Mine is as follows: That there was nothing extraordinary in the performance, except the eating of the live coals (item 4). To support this opinion in detail:

Item 1 consisted in the piercing of fatty portions of the body with sharp spikes. I was curious enough after the performance to execute this experiment on myself, only with pins instead of iron spikes, and found that it could be performed with practically no pain at all. The reader may remark that pins are not iron spikes; but if one takes into consideration a lifelong practice, and the fact that the spike is driven in every time in the same place, one can see that after a while the fat in that particular place becomes less and less capable of resistance, and the spike can be driven in almost without the subject knowing it. Of course, when the body is pierced from front to back, considerable care would have to be exercised that the spike went through fat alone, and did not touch a vital spot.

Item 2.—As long as a certain quantity of moisture is kept on the tongue, and a good deal of dexterity is employed by persons who are used to doing it, this trick can be—and is—carried out with impunity by performers on the music-hall stage, &c.

Item 3.—The coals were first beaten down by the Master with his hands; consequently, when trodden on and still further crushed down, they were no longer red. The feet of natives accustomed to walk over all kinds of ground without shoes become extraordinarily hard. A walk, for instance, along a stony road, which would be a minor torture for a European with bare feet, is nothing to the average Eastern.

Item 4.—This was certainly the most extraordinary part of the performance. Lane, in his 'Modern Egyptians,' mentions witnessing a similar feat, only in that case the coals were *red-hot*, several pieces were put in until the mouth was full, and finally the coals were swallowed. In the present case the coals were *not red-hot*, were only kept in the mouth for a short time, and were then ejected.

Item 5.—Provided the glass is chewed small enough, and with care enough, before swallowing, this feat is nothing uncommon.

Item 6.—With a certain amount of ingenuity, provided that the pressure were applied gradually, there does not seem to be any reason that this feat should not be accomplished in safety. The victim also had his hands resting on the sword, and doubtless thus relieved himself of part of its pressure.

These remarks, including the fact that the victim himself held the sword, apply to items 7, 8, and 9.

Items 10 and 11.—With regard to item 10, which I have seen alluded to as *piercing the eye*, it will be seen that nothing of the sort occurred. The loose skin of the eyebrow (a very different matter) was pierced. As for item 11, the man was extraordinarily corpulent, and thus it was only the fat of the throat which was pierced, and not the throat itself.

In making the above strictures I do not mean to say that considerable ingenuity, requiring long practice, was not displayed. I have, however, heard it asserted that there is something supernatural, uncanny, about the feats of these darweeshes. To this I reply—and the reader also doubtless with me—that in the performance which I saw there was nothing of the sort. Nor do I believe that anything bordering on the supernatural, or the apparently impossible, ever is accomplished by these darweeshes.

T. C. FOWLE.

*BADAJOS AND SOME FAMILY MATTERS.*

EARLY in the morning of April 7, 1812, Badajoz was stormed, and the British Army thereby accomplished one of the most glorious exploits recorded in all the annals of war. By the recent capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, after a siege of only twelve days, one of the gates of Spain had been burst open, and Wellington immediately began his preparations for the far more formidable task involved by the opening of another at Badajoz. The latter fortress is situated about 120 miles south of Ciudad Rodrigo, on the left bank of the Guadiana, which skirts its northern defences, and on the right bank of the river is Fort Cristoval, which had been the primary object of attack during the two former sieges, but on the final occasion was disregarded in favour of the Picurina, a strong work constructed on a hill adjacent to the south-eastern angle of the city walls. Wellington acted with the utmost secrecy, and in order the better to deceive the enemy as to his intentions, remained himself, until the last possible moment, on the Coa, thus leaving the enemy to infer that if further operations of a serious nature were in contemplation they would probably be based on Ciudad Rodrigo.

Siege materials were meanwhile being constructed at Elvas, as if for the purpose of strengthening the defences of that place, and at length all was ready; the covering forces were disposed, and the troops destined for the siege took post before Badajoz. On March 17 ground was broken against the Picurina. From that day fighting was incessant; for the gallant Phillipon was not the man to make other than an active defence of the fortress he held. On the 24th the work of San Roque, midway between the Picurina and the river, was silenced, and on the night of the 25th the latter fort was assaulted and captured after an heroic resistance which cost the assailants 4 officers and 50 men killed and 15 officers and 250 men wounded, out of the 550 engaged. It was well that this assault was not delayed, since a plan which Phillipon had conceived for strengthening the defence would otherwise have been carried into execution within the course of the next four-and-twenty hours.

By the capture of the Picurina it now became possible for the



besiegers to bring their guns to bear upon the walls of Badajoz itself. Meanwhile Soult, with Drouet and Daricau, was marching to the rescue, and Marmont also was expected to bring aid; therefore a prompt decision was imperatively required. San Roque, which had been temporarily silenced on the 24th, and since reduced to little more than a heap of ruins, still held out, though unable to prevent the besiegers from attempting to breach the curtain behind it. This bombardment, however, had little effect, and efforts were therefore concentrated on the Trinidad bastion, and on the Santa Maria, opposite to the Picurina. By April 5 the breaches had been so greatly battered that Wellington ordered the assault for that night, though after further personal examination he postponed it. On the 6th further progress was made, and the order for the assault was consequently repeated. The hour fixed was 10 P.M., when various points were to have been simultaneously assailed; but accidents upset the arrangements, the Fifth Division was delayed, and a lighted 'carcass,' thrown from the castle, discovered the Third Division waiting in readiness, and compelled it to attack half an hour too soon, the remainder of course following suit.

In vain the Fourth and Light Divisions strove to force their way by the breaches of the Trinidad and Santa Maria, though the San Roque had been rushed at once by the party, under Major Wilson of the 43rd Light Infantry, told off for that purpose. But the valour and lives of these heroic divisions were not expended in vain, for so near were they, time after time, to success, that the defenders were obliged to draw reinforcements from other points, which were thus weakened. At midnight, after 2000 men had fallen before the breaches, Wellington ordered the stormers to be recalled, so that a fresh assault might be organised and launched. But meanwhile the Third Division (Picton) had gained the castle, and from that moment, though fighting still fiercely continued for a considerable time, the issue ceased to be in doubt. Phillipon, who had been wounded, withdrew with a few hundred men to Fort Cristoval, where he surrendered shortly after daylight.

Thus was Badajoz won, but at the cost of a horrid carnage. There fell in the siege 5000 men in all, of whom 3500 were stricken in the assault, including 60 officers, and 700 men killed on the spot. Of the British troops of the Light Division, numbering 2679, there fell no less than 927; that is to say,

nearly 35 per cent. The losses of the 43rd and 52nd alone amounted to 670, including 36 officers, thus surpassing the total losses of the 7 British battalions of the Third Division, of whom there fell 490 in the successful assault of the Castle. Wellington hoped that Soult might attempt to revenge himself by battle; but the latter, finding that Marmont was still too far away to co-operate, declined a conflict that, in the circumstances, would have been very unequal.

The storming of Badajoz has reached its centenary, yet, strange to say, there are some still living whose own fathers were fighting in the Peninsula even before the memorable night of the 6th-7th April, 1812. Among the direct links with Badajoz is Lady Montgomery Moore, whose father, the famous Sir John Colborne, afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Seaton, was in command of the 52nd Light Infantry at both Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz. Lord Seaton entered the Army in 1794, and although he was then only sixteen years of age, the fact remains that 118 years have elapsed since he commenced his military career, the later events of which his daughter can even now recall with perfectly unclouded memory. Another link is Lieutenant-Colonel 'Freddy' Gore, whose father, General the Hon. Sir Charles Gore, served throughout the Peninsular War in the 43rd Light Infantry. Curiously enough, both Lord Seaton and Sir Charles Gore eventually commanded the Forces in Canada. Another interesting survival is that of Major Price Blackwood, whose uncle of the same name was killed at Waterloo, and had been wounded at Badajoz.

For myself Badajoz has a peculiar family interest. My grandfathers, who were second cousins, were both of my own name, and *both were severely wounded in the assault on the breaches.* My paternal grandfather, Samuel Pollock, a captain in the 43rd Light Infantry, and many years later promoted to a majority in the Rifle Brigade, commanded as a subaltern Lord Fitzroy Somerset's company of the 43rd in the assault, and, in consequence of the 'Forlorn Hope' having lost its way, was directed to attack the breach designated for that body, so that he, with his company, was the first to reach the deadly *chevaux de frise* of 'sword blades.' Lieutenant Pollock was struck down quite early in the assault, and lay for a long time under a heap of dead and wounded, but after the place had been won his servant, who had marked the spot, extracted him and carried him on his

back in to camp. This was no small feat of strength, for my grandfather stood over 6 feet 1 inch in his stockings, and must even then have scaled about 13 stone. Later on in the morning, when the rioting in Badajoz was in full swing, there arrived at my grandfather's tent a man of his company named Howard, bearing three fine fowls and a bottle of brandy. Now Howard was not what is known as a 'good character,' and was therefore often in trouble.

'Howard,' said my grandfather, 'you are the last man in the regiment from whom I should have expected such an attention.'

Howard's answer was remarkable.

'Sir,' he replied, 'you might have had me flogged twenty times, but you have always punished me yourself, and I have gratitude.'

All this time other soldiers, usually far better conducted, were engaging freely in every sort of excess. Very many officers have met with men like Howard. I myself shall never forget a service rendered to me by one such. Truly, the heart of the British soldier is very big, and it is made of pure gold.

Two days before the storming of Badajoz my two grandfathers, who had never previously met, chanced to make each other's acquaintance. One of them, hearing the other addressed as 'Pollock,' proceeded to accost him; they compared notes, thus discovering that they were distantly related, and parted with mutual wishes for further acquaintance. Samuel Pollock was invalided home, his wound having rendered him permanently unfit to march, and was employed as a recruiting officer until he was eventually placed on half-pay. Robert Carlile Pollock, on the other hand, who was then a subaltern in the 27th Regiment, continued to serve until the end of the war; his left arm was broken by a bullet during the assault of Badajoz, and his right similarly broken at Pampeluna. Samuel Pollock's medal has five clasps, and Robert Carlile Pollock's has nine. The silver cups carried by both are extant; one of them is in my own possession, and the other belongs to a cousin. A century ago, celluloid and enamelled iron drinking vessels had not been invented. I have also Samuel Pollock's sword, pistols, telescope, map of Spain, &c., as well as a bullock trunk which he had with him during the retreat to Coruña. Of Robert Carlile Pollock I have also several relics, and of his career in the Peninsula the following two events are of interest. By some

means which I cannot explain R. C. Pollock succeeded in taking part in the battle of Albuera, while 'absent without leave'; and being temporarily employed in some kind of staff capacity at the battle of Vittoria, he was fortunate enough to participate in the loot of King Joseph's carriage, his share being a silver soup-ladle, six spoons, and six forks, marked with the fugitive king's crown and initials, and a rather poorly painted miniature of the Emperor Napoleon. I have one spoon and one fork, and a copy of the miniature made by my daughter, which is decidedly superior to the original. Neither the broken arm received at Badajoz, nor that at Pampeluna, induced R. C. Pollock to go home; indeed, it is probable that after the second wound he must have returned to duty (adjutant of his battalion) with his arm in a sling; the battle of the Nive, for which he received a clasp, having been fought only ten days after the fall of Pampeluna. No evil consequences appear to have followed, as the clasps for the Nivelle, Orthez and Toulouse are also on the medal. In October 1816 R. C. Pollock was promoted captain in the 3rd Garrison Battalion, and after the disbandment of that corps was posted to the 90th Light Infantry, in which he served until December 1826, when he was promoted to an 'unattached' majority. In 1841 he was made a Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel. Two of his uncles, and three of his four brothers, were also soldiers.

The cousins, who, as already mentioned, had met for the first time shortly before the storming of Badajoz, did not meet again during the next thirty-three years. Meanwhile, Samuel Pollock, being on the recruiting service in Dublin, attended the St. Patrick's Ball at the Castle, leaning on crutches. A lady entered the ball-room, accompanied by a very young girl.

'Who are those two?' asked Samuel Pollock, of a friend to whom he had been talking.

'Lady Synnot and Miss Williamson,' was the reply.

'Ah,' rejoined he of the crutches, 'I shall marry the little one'—and he did. Miss Williamson's Christian names were Katherine Jane, a fact which I will ask the reader to remember in reference to a curious coincidence hereafter to be pointed out. Twelve years later, 1826, Robert Carlile Pollock, at a ball in London, met Margaret Alsager Sheridan, made up his mind, secured the lady's consent, retired on half-pay, and was married on February 27, 1827.

In 1845 R. C. Pollock, hearing of the charms of the Isle of Man as a summer resort, and being aware that Samuel Pollock was a resident in the island, wrote to 'my dear kinsman,' asking for assistance in finding a furnished house for a couple of months. The reply was a cordial invitation to the whole family, and a result of the visit that ensued was that my father, then a subaltern in the Royal Artillery and at home on leave, eventually married my mother, Catherine Jane Pollock. Thus my father, whose mother was named *Katherine Jane*, married a *Catherine Jane*—a coincidence which the difference of the 'K' and the 'C' does not materially impair.

I have not, however, yet done with coincidences. Samuel Pollock and his wife both had, in their early youth, very alarming experiences of the 'Rebellion of '98.' Samuel Pollock's father died in 1789 at the very early age of 23, in consequence of having taken a cold drink and sat in a draught, after coming in hot from shooting on a sultry September day. The result was pneumonia, and death within 48 hours. The widow with her two infant boys went to live with her father, Samuel Gelston of Granshaw, another of whose daughters was the wife of Robert Dalzell of the Abbacy, who became a leader of the local rebels. Samuel Gelston was a stalwart Orangeman, and the result was an attempt, in '98,' to burn Granshaw over his head. Robert Dalzell fortunately arrived in time to stop the proceedings, crying 'What, boys! would you burn my own father-in-law's house?' A little later, Dalzell, flying before the avengers, rode into Portaferry, where a company of the North Down Militia, under James Pollock, uncle of Samuel, guarded the crossing of the Strangford Loch. Pollock and his men, well knowing Dalzell, allowed him to escape; he reached Dublin in disguise, and obtained a passport from Lord Castlereagh. The latter recognised him, but held his peace, except when at the last moment he said 'All right, Dalzell; good luck to you!'

The experience of '98 that fell to the lot of Katherine Jane Williamson would have been an exceedingly distressing one had she been old enough to understand it. She was, however, less than two years of age at the time. Her father, the Rev. Thomas Daly Williamson, was vicar of Finglass, on the outskirts of Dublin. The rebels having entered Finglass, the vicar and his family found safety in the house of the Roman Catholic priest, who, although a suspect with reason, was their very good friend.

Presently the Dublin Militia arrived, drove out the rebels, and, on searching the houses, found, as they supposed, *two* priests, whom they promptly prepared to hang. Thinking that the officers might like to see the fun, the Sergeant-Major made his report to the Colonel: 'Plaze, yer honner, the Prastes is ready for hanging.' Proceeding to the site of the extempore gallows, Colonel Sankey discovered his kinsman, Williamson, standing in a cart, under a convenient tree, over a branch of which the rope encircling his neck had just been passed. Thus were *both* the priests reprieved, to the great disgust of their would-be executioners.

T. D. Williamson and his brother John were apparently great classical scholars; I have a good many prize volumes won by them at Trinity College, and a few won by Mrs. Williamson's father, Paul Benson of Springville, Co. Cork, who was a younger brother of Peter Benson of Birdstown, Co. Donegal. I have a 1745 medal of the 'True Blue Society,' inscribed with Paul Benson's name, and sundry other relics of him. Paul Benson's wife was Catherine, daughter of Nesbitt of Lismore, Co. Cavan; she lived to a very great age and died at Samuel Pollock's house in the Isle of Man. My grandmother had two brothers, both of whom served in the Army, and I mention this in order to introduce the interesting fact that during most of their school life the brothers Williamson were nominally officers in the Dublin Militia, and in receipt of pay as such! However, as the elder of the two landed at Lisbon on his sixteenth birthday, and took part in the assault of Badajoz, a very few days later, we need not grudge him a State-aided education! His name was Thomas Paul Williamson, and at Badajoz he was serving in the 48th Regiment, from which he was shortly transferred to the 93rd Highlanders, so that he afterwards took part in the disastrous attempt on Bergen-op-Zoom. I have his claymore, among other things that belonged to him.

It is a somewhat curious fact that although no less than ten members of the family served during the Great War—exclusive of Militia officers, but including a Major of Marines—only one, William, an uncle of R. C. Pollock, reached so high as the rank of full Colonel. Death, wounds, or matrimony cut short the careers of all. It had been so before, and has thus continued. The late Colonel A. J. O. Pollock, Royal Scots Fusiliers, is the only *Colonel* since 1806; he was a Staff College graduate of



great ability, and his son is now serving in the same regiment. My only son is a Captain in the 43rd (Oxfordshire) Light Infantry, and a very distant cousin, D. W. Pollock, sometime of the C.I.V. and afterwards of the I.Y., is in the Worcestershire Regiment. These are now our only representatives. My own son is the only male relative I have, of my own name, standing nearer than third cousin. Perhaps, however, the few are destined to atone for the shortcomings of the many.

Hitherto the only Pollock who has been fully successful was Field-Marshal Sir George Pollock; but on his account we are entitled to little credit, because, although almost all who bear a Lowland Scots territorial name are certainly connected, the link in this case lies behind at least two centuries. Albeit I have in reference to this very matter an amusing story to tell.

Hugh Pollock, a son of R. C. Pollock's uncle Robert, aged seventeen and on his way through London to join his regiment, wished to purchase an outfit of saddlery. He had never been in London before, but determined to choose a shop for himself. Happening to walk down Piccadilly, or—as some tell the story—past Charing Cross, Hugh espied his own name over the door of an apparently suitable establishment. 'This will do,' said he; 'stick to the ship.' The saddlery having been purchased, Hugh gave his name and address to an exceedingly nice-looking elderly man who had served him, and who turned out to be David Pollock himself. 'Hech, Sir!' cried the latter, 'I make nae doot we're akin.' To which Hugh replied 'Oh, I expect so,' and explained that seeing the name had decided his choice of a shop. Apparently, however, insufficient cordiality had been expressed, for David Pollock rejoined: 'Weel, ye mayn't be proud o' the connexion—if it exists—but I've three sons that will be greater men than you before they die.'

This prophecy was amply fulfilled. Mr. David Pollock's five sons included Sir George, a very distinguished Field-Marshal; Sir Jonathan, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer; and Sir David, Chief Justice of Bombay. As for Hugh Pollock, he retired when only a captain, and his two sons, Robert and Trevor,<sup>1</sup> did no better. Hugh Pollock's wife, by the way, was

<sup>1</sup> Trevor Pollock lost an arm in the Crimea, amputated at the shoulder-joint; he had a silver box made to hold the lower portion of the joint, and used to take it with him wherever he went. I do not know what has become of this curious treasure, but think I have heard that it was buried with its owner.



Mary Victorine Fielding, whose brother, Colonel Fielding, has been named as the probable original of Thackeray's Esmond.

In conclusion I will venture to quote an amusing copy of verses, after first explaining how and on what subject they came to be written. Elizabeth Pollock, an aunt of R. C. Pollock, married, August 11, 1787, Dr. William Hartigan, a distinguished physician and President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. Dr. Hartigan's daughter Charlotte married Sir Matthew Barrington, and in reference to the latter event Christopher Butson, the witty Bishop of Clonfert, cousin of the bride, wrote as follows :

ON CHARLOTTE HARTIGAN.

When the swain of the law  
 Pretty Charlotte first saw,  
 The ingenious and musical Hartigan,  
 On her charms with surprise  
 So fixed were his eyes,  
 You'd think from their sockets they'd start again.

Away went his quill,  
 No brief would he fill,  
 No conveying could think of, save Hartigan;  
 While he languished in Town  
 To the North<sup>1</sup> he wrote down  
 That his love would soon break his poor heart again.  
 For his vows and his suing,  
 For such desperate wooing,  
 The kind nymph his soft glance deigned to dart again;  
 Uncle John<sup>2</sup> was content,  
 So Mamma gave consent,  
 Smack together they went,  
 And we hope until Death they won't part again!

The Rev. Allen Stewart Hartigan will, I am sure, pardon this quotation of these very clever verses, of which he has, I believe, the original copy.

A. W. A. POLLOCK.

<sup>1</sup> Newry.

<sup>2</sup> John Pollock of Mountainstown.

### THE SOLDIER'S BREVIARY.<sup>1</sup>

It was the popular and practical-minded Henri Quatre who bestowed this sobriquet on the famous 'Commentaries' which under a title endeared by classical associations to the writer of the Renaissance—though somewhat repellent to modern ears—conceal so much of desperately sensational human interest.

A 'breviary' indeed, for soldier and layman, though little akin, one is tempted to add, to certain others which concern themselves with peace and goodwill among men, with charity, forbearance, and forgiveness of injuries.

For in this well-filled volume, the record of a crowded and glorious life, the 'Royalist butcher' (in this light the author appeared to certain of his contemporaries) has included a veritable manual of hatred, murder, and revenge, the theory and practice of homicide, and the whole art of persecution.

Perhaps, indeed, the strangest, the most truly illuminating trait about the memoirs, could our modern sympathies fully grasp it, is their historical connexion with religion. For the wondrous chronicle of the *Sieur de Montluc*—a work hall-marked with that intimate and effusive interest, that proselytist note of personal appeal, that characterise the French memoir above all known historical 'Quellen'—comprises not only the most copious history of sixteenth-century war and warfare, but the most graphic picture—journal or day-book it might be called—of religious persecution. And both the one and the other—not to say the most ferocious and bloodthirsty of the actions they recount—are the work of a devout and simple-minded believer in the efficacy of prayer, the Divine government of the world, and the judgment to come.

As a compendium of military life and habits, of every principle and practice connected with internecine war, this substantial work—which nowhere evaporates in such verbose and secondary gossip as stuffs the duodecimos of the contemporary *Brantôme*—stands by itself.

<sup>1</sup> The *Commentaries* (*Memoirs*) of *Messire Blaise de Montluc*, Marshal of France (1502-1577); first appeared in a handsome folio at Bordeaux, 1592. They were translated by Charles Cotton (of angling celebrity), London, 1674.

The catalogue of 'combats, encounters, skirmishes, battles, assaults, sieges, storms, &c. &c. &c.,' announced on the title-page as described by an eye-witness and principal agent ('I write nothing by hearsay,' he expressly tells us), is far from belied by the contents. On the contrary, there is interspersed, beside and among the adventures recounted, a wealth of lively human feeling, passion, heroism, and grim humour such as Julius Caesar knew not or left unrecorded. Anyone who cares to study (at first hand, and over the author's shoulder, so to speak) the fighting qualities of all the races of Europe, the maxims of war (and a war to be classed by itself as in great part a hideous species of man-hunt), the artifices by which to outmanœuvre an opponent, the terms it is advisable to accord sometimes (at any rate until they have served their purpose) to a vanquished enemy, the range of an arquebus, the weight of a suit of armour, and every esoteric detail connected with the manipulation, the encouragement, the preservation, and the destruction of a military force, need only turn to the Soldier's Briefing. Montluc, though he seldom leaves us in doubt as to his facts or feelings, makes no pretence to be a writer—a business for which he expresses a frank aversion. He would rather spend his nights 'cuirasse au dos.' His province was to act, not talk; and his business in life, as he recognises with only a mild regret (for it is hallowed by a sense of religious duty), the destruction of his fellow-beings.

A Gascon of the Gascons, heroic, indomitable, unhesitating, he marches through province after province of his unhappy country, a faithful officer entrusted with a serious commission—the extirpation of Huguenot heretics—and carrying fire and sword far and wide through every peaceful hamlet where lurk his foredoomed victims of the 'pretended' religion.

The business is not as easy as you might suppose. There are moments when even Montluc, the 'Royalist butcher,' feels his enthusiasm flag, and even doubts if he is anywhere 'near the end' of his task. It seems as if people loved heresy—that odious and accursed thing—for its own sake, or turned Huguenot merely to exasperate a pious dragonnader, half a dozen hydra-heads of so-called religious faction sprouting up as soon as you had lopped off one.

But a soldier knows his duty, and mortal man can only do his best.

Devoid alike of fear, scruple, or remorse, Montluc appears in

his simple confessions the incarnate soul, as it were, of some half-century of civil war and military persecution; marching on his way, accompanied ever by his two 'valets' of executioners, each armed with blades of surpassing sharpness and (we are to infer) with a plentiful supply of rope, and followed by an army of veterans, trained sleuthhounds, ready to rend and tear any wretched misbeliever whom the huntsman might throw ('recommend' is the gentle phrase) to their tender mercies as unworthy of his own special attention. As to the latter, he believed—and what modern authority is qualified to dispute the point with such an expert?—that a single gallows-bird swinging in the wind had more moral effect than a hundred recumbent corpses. 'Men might know his route by the decorations on the trees,' which recall the judicial 'orchard' of Louis the cruel and crafty. The sympathy of dog for cat, of terrier for vermin, of the hard-working agriculturist for a hard-preserving landlord's rabbits and hares—these are the feelings mirrored in the attitude of M. de Montluc towards followers of the spurious (and rebellious) religion. And when, long retired in ripe old age, his memory wanders back to these sanguinary scenes of long-drawn-out tragedy, the old soldier, battered and scarred with a score of wounds, can think of nothing to reproach himself with in all this (apart from a few unnecessary outbursts of temper) but that, if he had slaughtered many Huguenots, he *might*, with slightly better fortune, have slaughtered more!

It is perhaps necessary that we should read such books as this in order to realise the deep and cruel wounds with which France lacerated her own breast—wounds that only centuries of peace could have healed; whereas active military persecution was continued for some hundred and fifty years later—wounds that left the country on her final rejection of 'reform' the alternate prey of a fanatical orthodoxy and a ferocious anticlericalism.

To Montluc himself the matter appears less in the light of a religious crusade than of the repression of factious and anarchical revolt, the dimly comprehended alliance between Protestant free thought and Democratic political government stirring his loyal soul and martial temper to unquenchable wrath, or wrath only to be quenched, as we see, in rivers of blood. Apart from this unpleasant duty, which he would rather not have undertaken, but which, having undertaken, he was determined to carry through, the merciless instrument of persecution enjoyed a

European reputation as one of the first living masters of the great game of war.

Blaise de Montluc was born in 1502. At an early age he began life as an 'archer' in the Duke of Lorraine's company at a time when the chivalrous Bayard was but a lieutenant. Stirred by reports of the noble feats of arms 'performed every day' in Italy, and having obtained from his father some money and a Spanish horse, he rides forth to seek his fortunes, and, arrived at Milan, the family interest of two uncles secures him a private's rank (then occupied by many a warrior of gentle and even noble birth) under the Marshal de Foix.

Those were days, we learn incidentally, when discipline was understood, whereas nowadays 'all things are turned upside down.' One important factor in his career was the recrudescence of the struggle between Charles V. and Francis I. 'God Almighty raised up these two great Princes sworn enemies to one another, and jealous of one another's greatness, an emulation that cost the lives of two hundred thousand persons and brought a million of families to utter ruin.'

It was terrible indeed, but, as we should say, 'good for trade'—the great trade of war, into which Montluc plunged with hopeful enthusiasm and great natural ability, seeking the bubble reputation 'wherever he thought honour was to be purchased at whatever price,' but also with an anxious eye on permanent employment, the alternative to which was often enough destitution.

His ability and audacity had soon earned him a high reputation (in one of his earliest campaigns he had five horses killed under him), and succeeded in attracting the admiration of the great leaders of his day—a result which, he assures his aspiring military readers, cannot be achieved too soon, as it secures you on the one hand the esteem of the great, and on the other the attachment of the best soldiers, who are anxious to serve under you.

The 'improving' discourses by the way, the 'orations' delivered, sometimes, it would seem, under most unfavourable circumstances, the moral counsels and maxims liberally scattered about the pages of this chronicle of blood are eloquent and remarkable.

The opening address to young gentlemen entering the military service quite suggests that we are in the presence of something like the model 'Happy Warrior,' a Havelock, if not a Galahad. None of our own seventeenth-century moralists could be more

precise in condemning 'play, drink, and avarice' as the three malign influences that interfere with the evolution of the perfect commander.

How can you be contriving to overreach your enemy if your mind is full of cheating a friend at cards or dice, and so wasting time, 'when you should be continually among your soldiers, frequently enough, if possible, to know them all by name'? Be sober, be diligent; above all, be straightforward in money matters.

'To a worthy and brave man' (was this really the writer's experience?) 'nothing can ever be wanting.' You may think I have raised great profits and got a great estate, 'but I protest before Almighty God that in my whole life I had never thirty crowns more than my pay.' Be not covetous.

'Wealth will fall upon you when you least expect it, and one reward or bounty from the King is worth more than all the sharking tricks, thefts, and larcenies of your whole life.' And if monarchy spread its sacred aegis over actions only mildly describable in such terms, that was not the soldier's affair:

'Theirs not to reason why; theirs but to do and die,'

to spend and be spent in the Royal service.

And this ideal it is difficult not to believe that he fulfilled to the letter.

He himself steadfastly set aside all the familiar temptations of youth. He was none of the 'little amorosos, fitter for a distaff than a sword,' and could safely say that 'never any fond affection or affectionate folly diverted *him* from executing the orders entrusted to him.' *Nous le croyons bien*. Truly we may exclaim with the learned Pasquier, who devotes one of his valuable epistles to a eulogy of our author, that here was indeed a paragon, a man of words and deeds, for as a writer this cultured lawyer classes Montluc, in a quartet of famous Gascons, along with Montaigne, and in spite of certain *esprits visqueux*, who accuse him of the boastfulness that characterises his race, commends the candour and cogency of his language and his precepts, which, however egotistical in style, are aimed straight at the object in view.

Montluc began his career at an interesting crisis in the history of arms. Arrows were still flying in plenty—the arrows that, as Froissart tells us, pierced the best armour and beat down and brake men's swords out of their hands—and the crossbow was in

full vigour; but the arquebus was asserting itself, and became, before the close of our hero's career (as he had but too much cause to realise), the deadliest of projective weapons.

It is probably only personal pique that induces him to exclaim (in language that should give a Shakespearian value to his Memoirs) against this 'accursed weapon' by which 'pitiful cowards and poltroons' shot down at a distance 'with their confounded bullets' valiant men whom they dared not meet face to face.

Needless to say he did not disdain the use of it. At the bloody battle of Cerisoles (1544), being in command of all this particular arm, he was highly pleased with himself for the notion that occurred to him of planting a line of arquebusiers between his first and second ranks, so that they might 'shoot down all the captains of the enemy.'

The ingenuity of the device (Montluc assures us he believed nothing so clever had ever been thought of before) must be taken on trust, because *the enemy did the same*, and the net result—as neither party let fly till they were at pike's length—was the usual one of terrific mutual slaughter, partly due to the ferocity exhibited by the Swiss troops in revenge for the foul play at Mont Devl. 'Only one man' of the enemy 'was left alive' (a familiar phrase, subject, it may be hoped, to a moderate discount), and he, a certain Spanish colonel, was rescued with difficulty, having eight wounds upon him.

Montluc was knighted on the spot for his distinguished services both in counsel and action. On the tactics of every engagement he has plenty to say. His was the shrewd advice that kings and nobles sought in difficulties—all the more that his influence owed nothing to flattery, and no backstairs corruption restrained him from speaking his mind. If the strongest of cities or fortresses could be taken, it was Montluc on whom general and private alike relied, with touching confidence, to find the weak spot in it, or invent off-hand a device for counteracting its advantages. Just as at the psychical crisis of panic it was Montluc whose familiar adjurations cheered on the dispirited soldier, Montluc who, pike in hand, led the forlorn hope, covered the retreat, or, with a hundred chances against him, turned a rout into a victory. And it is all here—a dazing mass of first-hand anecdote—from the historic battle like Jarnac or Pavia (in which, by the way, he was captured) to the amateur skirmish in a rustic



lane or 'vineyard, or what we may call rough-and-tumble 'chamber fighting' on the walls, or up and down the back streets of a petty provincial town. Nothing seems to be forgotten by the septuagenarian table-talker—not a detail of practical soldiering, theory or spade-work, how to handle men in all known moods and tempers, how to escalate a rampart under heavy fire, how to grip your spear (not by the end but by the *middle*—'the race that shortens its weapons lengthens its boundaries'<sup>1</sup>), and how to avoid, at full gallop across country, the lances of a pursuing enemy within two or three yards of your crupper.

All this might doubtless be comprised in a mere technical manual, but it is here animated by a vivacity, humour, and devouring passion that enthuse the whole into a sensational entity perhaps unknown to any other military memoir.

We can hear him shouting 'Fall on! Fall on!' (as the enemy's fire slackens a little); 'they are afraid.' 'Which he did, *charging through and through and over the very bellies of them*. Their horse fled full speed . . . the footmen crept into copses and squatted in ditches, our musketeers *pursuing them into the woods like game*.'

'We were too few' (a paucity regretted more than once) 'to kill them all.' Otherwise, there was no talk of prisoners then, and had the King only been in a position to pay his army the Commander assures us he would never have suffered ransoms to be taken at all. But, as neither gens d'armes nor soldiery were paid (officially), this mercenary clemency could not well be avoided.

'This is not like a foreign war, *where men fight for Love and Honour!* In a civil war *one must be master*, as both live under one roof.' Hence the need for (what the spectator might call) rigour and cruelty. 'Otherwise, so great is the greed of gain, men would rather desire the continuation of the war than its end.' Thus the 'Royalist butcher' upon the sanctity of human life. How splendid, again, as a specimen of energy and eloquence is that scene in the council-chamber at Cahors! The details are immaterial. We need only premise that the place is eaten up with factions, and Montluc, deeply suspicious, moody, lowering, and reticent, having merely hinted to his friends that he will kill somebody if the right explanation is *not* forthcoming, reserves his fire till the last effective moment. '*Thou shalt answer my questions*' (which concern an illegal execution), he says to the

<sup>1</sup> *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.*

party concerned, 'rapping out a great oath,' 'or I will hang thee with my own hands, as I have hanged twenty better men.' This, be it observed, is mere common form of argument. Then, as a damaging admission is extorted from 'my gentleman' (whose pallor seemed to evidence his guilt and fear), the thunderstorm bursts. '*Damned, confounded villain, traitor to thy King!*'. . . Montluc's sword is half out of its scabbard. A couple of friends spring forward and seize his arm, while the offending parties (foiled it seems in their base design) 'fled away in so great a fright that *they leapt the stairs, not staying to count the steps,*' and there was an end of that episode. . . . On the next page we pass to another little problem of provincial administration, which, after ten days' judicial shilly-shally, promptly solves itself on the arrival of M. de Montluc by the suspension of two prominent individuals before the Town Hall windows.

'Justice,' he felt keenly, was nothing unless you put your heart into it—a lynch-lawyer fired with Mad Mullah fanaticism. 'It was best,' he had heard in these cases, '*to begin with the execution.*'

Hear him *aux prises* with one of these heretic ministers, who, when you told them of 'the King's will,' demanded 'What King?' and claimed a right to order their own proceedings and their indescribable religious practices as they pleased. Who could bear with this horrid scandal flaunting itself in broad daylight?

The vocabulary of wrath—tested almost on every page—here positively fails the writer. He explodes with moral nausea (*je crevois de despit*). Three of the wretches are brought before him for examination. We witness the trial of the foremost.

'I seized the fellow (*Verdier*) by the collar. "*Scoundrel villain!*" I said, "*have you dared to wag your filthy tongue against his sacred Majesty?*" "Ah, my lord," cries he, "have pity on me." "Pity for you, quotha?" say I, more enraged than ever, "when you show no regard for your King!" And I threw him roughly on the ground, where his neck struck against a corner of a stone cross which happened to lie there.'

"Strike, you rascal!" said I to my executioner; and strike he did on the word, and so hard that he cut off a couple of feet of the stone *as well*.

The two others I had hanged on an elm close by. The deacon, as he was but eighteen, I didn't want to kill, that he

might take the news to his brethren, but I had him so soundly flogged by my men that he died, I was told, some ten or twelve days later.'

In the tamer proceedings of ordinary warfare there is the same single-minded devotion to the business in hand.

At the capture of the town of Mont de Marsan, an enterprise, D'Aubigné testifies, of incredible audacity, accomplished by a select band of veterans who (under Montluc's special direction) forded a deep river to an ill-defended spot on the wall, the garrison of the castle desired to capitulate. To this Montluc had assented with some reluctance, partly perhaps out of weariness. Tired as a dog, and 'ten times on the point of falling in the street,' he could only snatch half an hour of rest while his clothes were dried. But as soon as the officers entrusted with the conditions had left him, he despatched a secret messenger to certain troops and their captains, with instructions to '*get in as best they could while the parley was going on, and put all to the sword.*'

It was only a necessary reprisal, we are assured, for the massacre of certain Catholics elsewhere, who had surrendered, like this unhappy garrison, on terms.

It need scarcely be observed that every page of the religious history of the country is starred — rubricated — with such massacres. Apart from wholesale military homicide, or the slaughter (not exactly cold-blooded) of surrendered prisoners, murder stood in the council-chamber of kings and stalked abroad in the streets.

St. Bartholomew's Eve and its attendant outrages may easily eclipse, to a modern eye, the violence of the Huguenot party, which, allied with the democratic malcontents of the realm, presented to Montluc and his loyal co-religionists the alarming reality of 'a nation within a nation at war with its King.' The prospect of their heretical enemies as a mere 'tolerated sect' (some half-century later), or as the exiled or exterminated faction over which fanatical autocracy (at the close of the seventeenth century) could chant a final *Nunc Dimittis*, was scarcely open to the straining gaze of these enthusiasts.

It is easy to understand that our author's lively detestation of his foes and victims was warmly reciprocated. But their plots against his life were as unsuccessful as their attempts to corrupt his ruthless integrity. Space forbids us to cull a score of anecdotes illustrative of this vindictive feeling.

'Whatever the Huguenots, my enemies, may have said or written,' Montluc protests over and over again both that he had never enriched himself by the war, that he had no 'familiar spirit' (but his own skill and courage), and that he was always resigned to the will of the Deity, which, as it so often seemed to coincide with his own plans, we may perhaps believe.

The half-superstitious confidence of his soldiers was, he himself tells us, fostered by the presages of victory which he used to invent for their amusement.

Before his last military engagement, however, he assures us that he entertained an absolute conviction he would be shot or otherwise wounded in the head. Having begged certain particular friends to take charge of his family (especially of his daughter Charlotte Catherine, who had been christened by the King and the Queen Mother) and to act as his executors, he endeavoured to put the ominous fancy aside.

The next moment we see him thoughtfully making the most of 'ten bottles of wine sent by Mme. de Panjas,' and encouraging his friends to the assault. 'The men in this place,' he reminds them, 'are those who have destroyed your churches and ruined your houses, and must be made to disgorge what they have swallowed. If you carry the place, and put them all to the sword, you will have the rest of Bearn easily enough. . . . Go on, then, in the name of God.' And on they went, in the religious spirit already indicated; but their infantry, for some reason, showed signs of flagging, though the besiegers' cannon played manfully over their heads. The marshal then perceived, for the hundredth time, that if the thing were to be done he must do it himself, and, forgetting his 'conceit of being killed or wounded,' 'Comrades,' he says, 'none can fight like the noblesse. Let us to the work ourselves. You and I,' clasping his friend M. de Gohas by the hand, 'will fight together, and if I fall, think nothing of it so long as the victory is for the King.'

Cheerfully the rest followed him, the gentlemen pressing so close upon their leader (though this suggests more devotion than prudence) that they almost touched one another across the hundred and fifty yards of open ground that lay between them and the breach, 'the enemy firing with great fury upon us all the way,' and the bravest of his chosen band falling to right and left. Montluc's own artillery had breached two storeys of a tower, desperately defended by the enemy above and below, and it was

here, while arranging for ladders to be laid across the moat, that he received an arquebus shot full in the face. M. de Gohas would have supported him. 'Let me alone,' he said; 'I shall not fall. Follow your point.' And to others (though bathed in blood and scarce able to speak), 'Do not flinch—I will go get myself dressed, but *if you love me, let no one follow, only revenge me.*'

Half-fainting, but with the minimum of assistance, he retires to find a surgeon, 'who dressed me, and with his fingers (so wide were the orifices of the wound) pulled out the broken bones from my two cheeks, and cut away a great deal of flesh that was bruised and torn.'

The discouraged soldiery apparently recovered themselves, and M. de Gohas and another trusty comrade of the wounded hero were shortly enabled to bring him the joyful news of the capture of the castle. 'The soldiers are laying about them, and *putting all to the sword.* Assure yourself we will *revenge your wound.*'

One might perhaps surmise that a veteran hero, in gratitude to the Deity he so constantly addresses for his own narrow escape, might have gracefully dissuaded his lieutenant from converting an assured victory into a ruthless massacre.

'Praised be God!' exclaims the bandaged sufferer from his couch. 'I care not now for death. I beseech you return back, and, as you have ever been my friend, *so do me now that act of friendship not to suffer so much as one man to escape with life.*'

The eight religious-civil wars that kept French provincial life from stagnation during the sixteenth century are full of such 'acts of friendship' as this, which, alas! did but little to cement the union of sects and classes.

'They would fain have saved the Minister and the Governor,' we read on hopefully, but it was only '*to have hanged them before my lodging.*'

And that cheering tonic was denied the wounded general by the precipitancy of his soldiers, who, perhaps to make amends for their backwardness at the first assault, tore the helpless prisoners from those who were half-disposed to preserve them, and then and there cut the wretched creatures 'into a thousand pieces.' Not all—let us be exact; for fifty were compelled to leap from a high tower into the moat, in which they were drowned.

There were only two saved, who were in hiding. Some there were offered as much as four thousand crowns to save their lives,

but (on the principle already mentioned) none of the soldiers would look at a ransom. Most of the women, too, were slaughtered, some of them having done considerable mischief by throwing stones.

Two Catholic merchants, prisoners of the enemy, were preserved; otherwise only the two referred to, who were secretly 'help'd away,' survived to tell the tale of this little episode, which has not quite a satisfying ring, even to the author's own ear. 'Do not think,' he concludes, 'you who read this book, that I caused this slaughter to be made *so much* (*nota bene*) out of revenge for the wound I had received, as to strike terror into the country' and intimidate (on principles endorsed by many a leader before Cromwell) those who 'dared to make head against our army.'

With all such as are, under these circumstances, 'so impudent as to abide cannon,' a general must 'bar his ears to all capitulation and composition.' Which may be all true enough; but it is to be observed that his friend, the aforesaid M. de Gohas, returning fresh from the fight and finding him scarce able to speak, thought the most cheering medicine he could bring would be the news, 'We have sufficiently revenged you. *There is not one man left alive.*'

The injury thus emphatically impressed upon the mind of the enemy was serious enough, through the patient's continuous loss of blood, to cause M. Montluc's friends to despair of his surviving the night. He recovered, but it was only to abandon all active service and surrender to the King his governorship of Guienne.

The very next morning, indeed, with his habitual self-devotion, the wounded Marshal summoned his officers around him, implored them not to let His Majesty's service suffer through this unfortunate accident, to think no more of their leader of the past than if he were already dead (at which many of the company shed tears), and to follow loyally the new commander, M. de Gondrin, whom he (Montluc) recommended to their obedience. But the pre-eminence of the personal element (which he himself so strongly emphasises) in the military relations of the sixteenth century ordered matters otherwise.

No sooner was his back turned on the camp than 'all the gentlemen volunteers,' he tells us, 'and most of the foot,' retired from the service, unmoved by the most impassioned appeals to their loyalty. His own, indeed, flourished under difficulties—at

least, after the death of Henry II., for whom he expressed a lively regard—in a soil, we may say, of distance and ingratitude. Montluc's governorship the King (Charles IX.) had already given away before it was resigned, an act of unusual discourtesy, though the office was in itself far from a sinecure—'to have to do with the Queen of Navarre and the Prince her son, who is already grown up to a man, the principal Governor, and an enemy to our religion'—the market value of the French Crown in Masses not having been yet decided.

Moreover, simple soldier as he was, and devoted Catholic, he makes no pretence of believing that the interests really thought to be at stake were those of religion. He tells us in so many words that if he could get the Queen, the Admiral (Coligny), Condé, and the Duc de Guise in one room, he could soon bring them to avow that the mobilisation of some three hundred thousand troops was inspired by a more mundane motive than the salvation of souls.

Risen from the rank of a mere gentleman entirely by his own unremitting exertions, if not exactly one of those he refers to who 'trailed a pike at six francs, and afterwards came to high preferment,' 'renowned throughout Christendom, and hoping by God's grace,' as he tells us, 'to die in that reputation,' Montluc was, perhaps, the greatest soldier, of a subject, that ever was in France.

So says his worthy translator, who, while admitting that his hero's record includes much that is sanguinary and cruel, feels himself that 'the necessity of the time would have it so,' that 'sacredge and rebellion cannot be too severely handled,' and that 'severity must needs appear a virtue where clemency would evidently have been a vice.'

The modern reader, as he views such a human engine of destruction started on its unswerving line and sustained through fifty-two years of ruthless carnage by so serene a moral confidence, may perhaps be thankful not only that 'the necessities of those times' are the superfluities of our own, but also that in many a warrior, even of that date, the sense of duty was modified by other human considerations.

G. H. POWELL.



*SIXTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS.**MORE PASSAGES BY THE WAY.*

BY HENRY LUCY.

## XI.

## THE MYSTERY OF LORD MACDONNELL.

As things turned out the apex of Mr. George Wyndham's Parliamentary career was reached when in 1903 he, being then Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, successfully piloted the Land Purchase Bill to the haven of the Statute Book. For once Ireland, under glamour of a bribe of a hundred millions sterling pledged on the credit of the British taxpayer, was really united. Mr. Wyndham was the hero of the hour. Some who had watched his career with almost affectionate admiration recognised a long stride towards the goal of the Premiership.

The sheaf of congratulations—written, spoken, and telegraphed—was varied by a note reaching him from a trusted colleague on the Dublin staff, advising him to retire whilst the halo of Administrative success and personal popularity shone round his head. He was warned that if, disregarding this advice, he stayed on, within two years all he had done for Ireland and for the Ministry of which he was a member would be forgotten and he might drift into a dilemma that would, possibly permanently, shatter his career. The Chief Secretary made confident reply that he had in contemplation other, even greater, work for Ireland, and till it was accomplished he would at any personal risk stick to his post. According to tradition at the Irish Office where the story ran, the soothsayer endorsed his chief's letter 'Wyndham's a lost man' and put it away in the recesses of his desk.

The prophecy was verified within the period of time specified. On September 26, 1904, there was published what came to be known as the Dunraven scheme of Home Rule. 'Devolution' the wise promoters called it. Ulster with something like a screech of rage discovered below the muffler the beard of the Home Ruler. The project was the outcome of a Conference of what was known as the Irish Reform Association, of which

Lord Dunraven was President. A significant feature of the movement was that the initiative came, not from Land League associations or prancing Nationalist members advertising themselves at Westminster, but from representative landlords. Between them they owned 229,000 acres of Irish land, and, to put the issue on the meanest level, they wanted to make the best of their possessions. The main proposition was the devolution of legislative labour and administration 'which, while avoiding matters of Imperial concern, would relieve the Imperial Parliament of a mass of business it cannot deal satisfactorily with, and which occupies its time to the detriment of more important matters.'

I heard Mr. Gladstone introduce his Home Rule Bill in the House of Commons in 1893. He rose at a quarter to four in the afternoon, and resumed his seat at six o'clock. It was a prodigious exposition. It would be difficult for the most expert practitioner to give, in equal number of words, a more precise summary of the avowed object of his Bill than is presented in the sentence quoted from the Irish Reform Association's pronouncement.

Like Mr. Gladstone, the Irish Reform Association vehemently insisted upon maintaining Imperial supremacy. They started from the proposition that much of the business relating to Irish affairs which Parliament is unable to cope with might, with perfect safety, and with advantage alike to Ireland and the House of Commons, be delegated to an Irish body to be constituted for the purpose. That was Mr. Gladstone's contention in 1893. It is in the machinery of execution that the plans differ. Lord Dunraven and his colleagues, profiting by dire experience, eschewed the suggestion of a Parliament on St. Stephen's Green. They proposed a statutory body composed of Irish representative peers and members of the House of Commons representing Irish constituencies, the whole to be leavened by the collaboration of a new Financial Council. To this body was to be delegated authority to promote Bills for purely Irish purposes.

As to financial conditions, looming large to-day in debate on the latest Home Rule Bill, it was pointed out that in the preceding year, 1903, £7,548,000 had been expended on Irish services. It was proposed that, excluding Post Office Telegraphs and taxes under the head 'General Services,' which might be

regarded as disbursements for Imperial purposes for which the Irish Government prepares no estimates, an annual sum of six millions should be placed at the disposal of the newly-constituted body which was not to be called a Home Rule Parliament.

The Chief Secretary had long been suspected by the Ulster members seated behind him in the House of Commons of a disposition to tamper with extreme Unionist principles. On the promulgation of the Dunraven scheme they were promptly alert. The chasm created by the Tariff Reform crusade was temporarily closed. It was made known beyond doubt or cavil that the Unionists of 1886 and 1893 were resolute in their determination to hold no truck with the accursed thing, whether it were bluntly called Home Rule or masqueraded under other names. So serious was the alarm, so grave the suspicion of Ministerial complicity, that the Chief Secretary found it desirable to take the unusual—as far as I remember, the unique—step of writing to the *Times* disclaiming sympathy with the new movement of the class of Irish landlord who, two years ago, by analogous manœuvring, had forced the hand of the Government in the matter of land purchase.

All this happened during the Parliamentary Recess of 1904. To the outsider it seemed that the Chief Secretary's letter categorically denying complicity with the floating of the Dunraven scheme had been accepted and the matter at an end. But Ulster is a sleuth-hound which having got its nose on a trail does not uplift it except to spring on the fugitive. Within a week of the opening of the Session of 1905, an organised attack was made on the Chief Secretary. It was believed, as it turned out not without foundation, that the scheme of the Irish Reform Association was a sequence of confabulation pointing to concession of Home Rule in which the Chief Secretary, the Under-Secretary (Sir Antony MacDonnell), and the Viceroy (the Earl Dudley) had taken part, their action and intention being within the cognizance of the Prime Minister.

There was nothing fundamentally impossible or unfamiliar in these proceedings. That a Unionist Government should in the course of events introduce a modified, carefully guarded system of Home Rule, would not be more surprising than was the adoption of Free Trade by Sir Robert Peel, or the production by Disraeli in 1867 of a Reform Bill embodying household

suffrage. Had Disraeli been in the position of Mr. Balfour in the spring of 1905 he would probably have found irresistible the temptation to grasp the nettle and by bold comprehensive scheme of devolution of local government complete the pacification of Ireland commenced by the Land Purchase Bill.

It is a historic fact that whilst Gladstone was drifting towards the rapids that eddied round the Home Rule Bill of 1886, 'The Stop-Gap Government' as Mr. Chamberlain scornfully called it, was coquetting with Parnell with intention of forestalling the Liberals in securing the Irish vote. Lord Carnarvon, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in Lord Salisbury's brief administration, sought an interview with the Nationalist Leader with the object of ascertaining whether at the price of giving Ireland some form of Home Rule, a truce might not be patched up that would place the Liberals in a minority. Justin McCarthy, who took a personal part in the negotiations between the Viceroy and the Irish Leader, felt bound to abstain from particulars. But in his 'History of our Own Times,' he, with full knowledge of every turn of the game wrote: 'Mr. Parnell and Lord Carnarvon seemed to have found a satisfactory basis of arrangement.' At this stage Lord Salisbury discovered, as Mr. Balfour learned in analogous circumstances happening eighteen years later, that the alliance of the Irish Nationalists might be gained only with the loss of the support of the Ulster Members and of a large body of uncompromising Unionists representing British constituencies. He accordingly put his foot down on the nascent scheme. Lord Carnarvon resigned the Lord-Lieutenancy, and nothing more was heard of the affair save recriminations from time to time arising in Parliament and elsewhere.

Later still, in the autumn of 1910, during the Conference between the heads of Parties summoned in effort to settle the differences between Lords and Commons, there was repetition of the old tactics. The *mot d'ordre* was circulated and faithfully obeyed by an important section of the Unionist Press that by way of averting the threatened doom of the House of Lords a bargain might be struck whereby the Home Rule question would finally be laid at rest, to the satisfaction of the Nationalists and the possibility of acceptance by good Unionists. After vigorously running its course for something like a month this movement, *soi-disant* 'The Voice of Reason,' slain by an arrow shot from Ulster, halted as suddenly as it had sprung into pace.

With respect to the revolt that occurred in February 1905, shaking Mr. Balfour's government to its foundations and resulting in the loss of a valued colleague, Ulster had broad ground to stand upon. This curious and critical episode in political history began with the appointment of a new Under-Secretary. The selection of Sir Antony MacDonnell as a leading hand in the administration of Irish affairs under a Unionist Government was certainly an action justifying the surprise and suspicion of Ulster members. Marvel and mystery were increased by the unprecedented conditions under which office was accepted. Sir Antony, as he frankly stated in the correspondence read by Mr. Wyndham in the House of Commons, was not only of Irish birth but was an avowed Home Ruler. Why was he, of all men in the world (except, perhaps, Mr. John Redmond), selected by a Unionist Government for the post?

Restlessness in Ulster increased when it was discovered that the Under-Secretary had been colloquing with Lord Dunraven. It was even alleged he had some hand in drafting the proposals of the Irish Reform Association. It turned out that these allegations, at the time of their circulation appearing to be too monstrous to be true, recorded actual matters of fact. Debate arising on the subject in the House of Lords in February 1905, Lord Dunraven made a clean breast of the matter. 'After the publication of the first report of the Reform Association,' he said, 'I asked Sir Antony MacDonnell to assist me in drafting the heads of a more elaborate scheme on its lines. He very kindly consented to do so, and spent two days with me on his way to stay with Lord Lansdowne. We went thoroughly into the matter, and drafted a rough report.' Lord Dunraven added that he 'had many long conversations with Mr. Wyndham and with Sir Antony MacDonnell on all kinds of subjects and topics connected with Ireland,' and that the impression he derived from the interchange of views was that 'Mr. Wyndham saw no particular objection to a general scheme of administrative reform proposed by perfectly independent and private individuals being put forward for public criticism and discussion.'

Lord Lansdowne, equally frank, admitted that Sir Antony MacDonnell had been in the habit of conferring with Lord Dunraven on many occasions with the full knowledge and approval of the Chief Secretary, and that he had collaborated with him 'in working out proposals for an improved scheme of local

government for Ireland.' When the House came to think of it, there was nothing surprising in this. In Sir Antony's letter to Mr. Wyndham accepting the Under-Secretaryship, a communication read by the latter to the House of Commons, it was stipulated that, as Lord Lansdowne put it, he, profiting by experience gained in the Government of India, should be at liberty to tackle 'the co-ordination of the many detached and semi-detached boards, the old-fashioned and complicated organisation, into which the Government of Ireland is at present subdivided.' Lord Dudley was even less inclined to cover up his tracks. He admitted that, as Lord-Lieutenant, 'he did freely discuss the reforms suggested in Lord Dunraven's scheme on several occasions with the Under-Secretary, and did not at all think that Sir Antony MacDonnell was exceeding his functions.'

And where was the Prime Minister (Mr. Balfour) through this interesting period? A year later, attacked in the House of Commons by Sir Edward Carson, Lord Dudley found opportunity of declaring that he 'should be very glad to make public the correspondence that passed between the late Prime Minister and myself at the time of the Devolution incident. But as I cannot do that without Mr. Balfour's permission I content myself with stating that, though I fully explained to the late Prime Minister the nature of my connection with what you describe as Sir A. MacDonnell's Home Rule scheme, he never conveyed to me any intimation that he or the Government disapproved, strongly or otherwise, of my conduct.' The permission challenged was never given. But Lord Dudley's statement that he had fully explained matters to the Prime Minister remained uncontradicted.

In face of this testimony there remains no doubt that the project of boldly grappling with the Home Rule question was entertained by the Unionist Government during the last year of the Chief Secretaryship of Mr. Wyndham. Eight days before the first report of the Irish Reform Association put Ulster on guard, I received a significant letter from a Minister whose department brought him into close touch with the Government of Ireland, in which he calmly contemplated the introduction of a scheme of Home Rule thinly disguised under the name Devolution. The correspondence arose in connexion with speculation on the Prime Minister's rumoured intention of devoting the coming session to a Redistribution of Seats Bill.

That, as involving a loss of 30 seats to Ireland would, my friend significantly argued, be possible only in the shape of a bargain whereby Ireland, making the sacrifice, was placated by concession of a system of Home Rule passing under the respectable alias of Devolution. Referring to an article in which I had discussed probabilities of a Redistribution Bill the Minister wrote: 'I am very much in sympathy with the views you express upon the absolute necessity of putting an end to the Parliamentary deadlock. But I do not think Irish over-representation is likely to be dealt with without some form of Devolution, which we must not call Home Rule, and which ought not to be Home Rule in the form already submitted to Parliament.'

The storm aroused by disclosures and admission extracted in Parliamentary debate made it evident that someone must be thrown to the wolves. It appeared natural that the victim should be either the Lord-Lieutenant or the Under-Secretary, or both. They had severally avowed participation in the plot of the Irish Reform Association and were equally unrepentant. The Chief Secretary, on the contrary, had repudiated co-operation or even sympathy with the movement. But it was he who was sacrificed, Lord Dudley remaining at Dublin Castle until opportunity presented itself of rewarding loyal service by appointment to a Governorship in Australia. There may have been good reason for that. Pushed to extremes, the Lord-Lieutenant might have overcome reluctance to publish the correspondence between Mr. Balfour and himself without first obtaining permission. But what about the Under-Secretary? A Premier who under political exigencies did not hesitate to throw over a Chief Secretary who happened to be an old and intimate friend, would surely not shrink from dismissing a subaltern who had deliberately striven to establish a policy diametrically opposed to the fundamental principle of the Government of which he was a member. To the out-spoken disgust of the Ulster members, Sir Antony remained undisturbed at his post.

I have heard from a source whose authority commands respect an interesting explanation of this mystery. His late Majesty King Edward VII., so the story ran, earnestly desirous of putting an end to discontent in Ireland, having during his visit to India whilst yet Prince of Wales gained personal knowledge of Sir Antony's successful administration in



that country, nominated him for the post at the Irish Office. At an earlier date the King's prescience and shrewd insight into character had, on something the same lines, been amply justified. It was on his Majesty's suggestion that Sir Edward Bradford, with whose work in India he was also personally familiar, was appointed to the command of the Metropolitan police, an experiment crowned with success. According to my informant, it encouraged effort in another direction, with the result that Sir Antony, resigning his high position as member of the Council of India, returned to his native country as Under-Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant. If this story be true—I assume no responsibility beyond that of raconteur—it will explain the extraordinary fact, incomprehensible and irritating to the Ulster members, that a powerful Ministry, created and maintained on Unionist principles, should, after what took place in the House of Commons, have dismissed Mr. Wyndham with ignominy, whilst they retained Sir Antony MacDonnell in office under the Chief Secretaryship of that stern unbending anti-Home Ruler, Mr. Walter Long.

One was under high protection, the other stood alone.

## XII.

### THE SHAH IN LONDON.

I HAPPENED to see a good deal of the Shah during his visit to this country in the summer of 1889. Amongst other festivities I was present at the luncheon in Guildhall where the Lord Mayor entertained the Persian Sovereign. The scene was one of unsurpassed splendour even in this historic hall. The Lord Mayor (Sir James Whitehead) donned for the occasion something new. He wore a white tippet of ermine over a robe of ruby velvet, a kingly dress, perhaps a trifle hot for midsummer. On his left sat the Princess of Wales, to-day Queen Alexandra, by common consent looking younger than ever. The Shah, who had not seen her since his former visit sixteen years earlier, curiously regarded her, wondering where she had learned the secret of perpetual youth. She looked younger than her second daughter, who sat close by, much younger than Mrs. Chamberlain, whom Mr. Chamberlain, arrayed in ex-Ministerial dress, carefully convoyed through the crowd. Next

to the Princess of Wales, on the left of the Lord Mayor, sat Edward Prince of Wales, with Princess Christian and Prince Albert Victor on his left. Further still to the left were Prince Christian, Prince Henry of Battenberg, and the Duke of Cambridge.

On the right of the Shah, escorted to the table by his Majesty, was the Lady Mayoress, whose bright presence contributed considerably to the unmistakable enjoyment of the swarthy potentate. The two chatted together in friendliest fashion, though Lady Whitehead did not speak Persian nor the Shah English. French, which the Shah talked indifferently well, was the medium of conversation. Next to the Lady Mayoress was the Persian Minister, from whom the Shah constantly sought information as to the purport of the various speeches delivered. Further on was Henry Drummond Wolff, ever so much stouter than when he still sat in the House of Commons.

There was a great muster of Her Majesty's Ministers, Lord Salisbury coming in late and receiving an ovation. This was repeated when he rose to respond to the toast of his health. The three most popular persons in the company were undoubtedly the Princess of Wales, the Shah, and the Prime Minister. If politeness permitted, it must be said that of the three the cheers for Lord Salisbury were the loudest and the most prolonged. Amongst other Ministers who had temporarily run away from work was Lord Cross, seated almost by himself at the end of the principal table. The Secretary for India was doubtless relieved when, looking up, he discovered that the toastmaster at the Guildhall had been, perhaps temporarily, superseded. This official was so ludicrously like Lord Cross that it was with difficulty the company on Lord Mayor's Day could keep their countenances when the two personages came together into Guildhall. At luncheon the Conservatives had their joke, declaring that the new toastmaster was uncommonly like John Morley.

There happened during the speech-making an incident which, had it terminated as it threatened, might have shaken the Persian Empire to its foundation. When the Shah's health was proposed he rose in his stately way to make acknowledgment of the honour done to him. The watchful flunkey in attendance withdrew His Majesty's chair, under the impression that he

was about to make a speech. The Shah, after standing a moment, looking round the audience and making a slight gesture of thanks, attempted to resume his seat. With great presence of mind the footman managed partially to replace it. The Shah, all unconscious of what had happened, and sitting plump down, succeeded in saving himself from falling by catching the extreme edge of the chair. What would have happened had His Imperial Majesty, in the face of this splendid company, disappeared under the table the human mind shrinks from conjecturing. When he realised what had happened he quite enjoyed the incident, laughing outright.

It appeared that the object of the Shah in thus abruptly resuming his seat was to communicate with the Persian Minister, to whom, across the Lady Mayoress, he addressed some words. Then the Persian Minister arose, and, to everybody's horror, announced that His Majesty desired to drink the health of the Lord Mayor.

According to the carefully planned programme, printed copies of which were distributed at the tables, this was a task allotted to the Prince of Wales, and came last on the list, after the toast of the Prince's own health and that of Her Majesty's Ministers. It was an awkward moment; but all embarrassment was avoided by the tact of the Prince of Wales and the readiness of the Lord Mayor. H.R.H. made a friendly sign to Sir James Whitehead, who, promptly rising, responded to the toast as if everything were in order, and the Shah, still smiling at the reminiscence of his narrow escape from premature withdrawal from the luncheon table, twirled his moustache and rearranged his gold eyeglasses as if he had done an exceedingly smart thing. Despite this little hitch—perhaps partly in consequence of it—everything went off swimmingly, and the Shah departed in the highest good humour, greeted by the applause of a crowd that stretched from Cheapside to Buckingham Palace.

None of the many pictures published did justice to the Shah. They presented something of the stolid dignity of his look, but missed altogether evidences of quick humour that frequently flashed across his swarthy features. He was, I should say, a man with a keen sense of humour, which was apt to find expression in drawings in black and white. In speech His Majesty was hampered by the circumstances that Persian is not fluently spoken in London, whilst his own French was of the kind spoken in whatever locality in Persia answers to Stratford-

atte-Bow. Thus any repartees that occurred to him, or any shrewd observation that flashed across his mind were perforce reserved for his diary.

Yet he talked freely to his neighbours, who more or less successfully looked as if they understood him. After his visit to the Opera, he was present at a supper given by Gus Harris of Drury Lane, at which were gathered some of the principal actors and journalists in London. Several were presented to His Majesty. To each he had something pleasant to say in a guttural tongue, through which here and there something that sounded like a French word was recognised.

It was a difficult rôle to play for a man, the focus of attraction moving through a city peopled by millions, unable to gather what was being said, finding it equally impossible to communicate his thoughts. The Shah bore the ordeal with superb equanimity. A more kingly manner it is impossible to conceive.

All through the magnificent scene at Guildhall he was simple, unconventional, always dignified. As, entering the library, he walked up between the crowd of brilliantly dressed ladies lining the approach to the dais on which he was to receive the Address of the Corporation, he moved with leisurely pace, turning to the right and to the left, looking straight at the ladies as if their faces were bonnets hanging up in a shop window. They had come out to see him. He meant to see them, and he accomplished his task thoroughly. When the ceremony in the library was over, and the procession was formed for Guildhall, where luncheon was served, the Lord Mayor, giving his arm to the Princess of Wales, asked the Shah to conduct the Lady Mayoress. The proper thing to do was to present his arm to the lady. The Shah knew a better way of going about with a pretty woman. He took her hand, and thus the two walked into Guildhall like school-boy and school-girl going a-maying.

At luncheon I had the good fortune to sit next to Sir Owen Burne. When the Shah visited England in 1873, Sir Owen, always indispensable, was appointed by the Government to personally conduct his Majesty. As partial reward for his service he came into possession of a copy of the Shah's diary, from which he showed me some piquant extracts. Banqueting at the Mansion House during this earlier visit his Imperial

Majesty seems to have been most impressed with the appearance and action of the Toast Master. Here is his note on the subject : ' The Deputy Mayor stood behind me, and every now and then, in a loud voice, gave notice to those of the company that they should prepare to drink, so that when the master of the house drank wine to the health of the guests they should rise and drink.'

The Toast Master at that date was Johnny Toole's father. How delighted the son, if he were yet with us, would be to know that the Shah of Persia regarded his sire as Deputy Lord Mayor.

The Lord Mayor's costume worn at the Guildhall was much talked of. The ermine tippet and the ruby gown were new in City functions, though they seemed familiar on ceremonial occasions in the House of Lords. Sir James Whitehead tells me he wore the Court robes of an earl, holding, upon what diligent search regards as unimpeachable authority, that on occasions when he officially entertains a foreign Sovereign the Lord Mayor of London has from time immemorial held the rank of an earl.

An interesting episode in the Shah's stay in London was a visit from Mr. Gladstone. After the luncheon at Guildhall the Shah met Lord Salisbury in a private room, where tea and cigarettes were served. The two talked together for some time, and the Shah was urgent in his inquiries as to the health and general position of Mr. Gladstone, evidently regarding the Premier as the person most likely to be able to give him an authoritative account. On the next day Mr. Gladstone called to pay his respects to the Imperial visitor. It was, I hear from one who was present, pretty to see Drummond Wolff assisting to receive, in his character as British Minister at the Persian Court, his old adversary of Fourth Party days. Mr. Gladstone, who was a master of the French language, got on admirably with the Shah, conversing with him for some minutes in animated fashion.

Just before the Shah left town on a provincial tour he and Randolph Churchill came together and conversed for a few moments. It was funny to see the two, each filling up awkward pauses in the halting conversation by twirling his moustache. During his banishment at Teheran, Drummond Wolff often had tender recollections of his revered colleague and leader brought to mind by observing the Shah thus disporting himself.

During his public appearances in London his Majesty

incessantly went through certain manœuvres worked with clock-like fidelity. First, with both hands he readjusted his gold eye-glasses. Then he stroked his hair down with the palm of his hand. Finally, first with the right hand, then with the left, he elaborately curled his moustache—not with that swift, violent action that marked Randolph's wrēstlings with himself when George Hamilton was speaking in the House of Commons, but with grave, majestic sweep of the hand exceedingly comical to behold. When he had worked both ends of his moustache into proper condition he dropped his hands to his side, gave his head a little twitch, and looked slowly round the crowd spread out before him. Then he went through the whole process again, beginning with his gold-rimmed spectacles, finishing with the much-belaboured moustache.

Among the country houses honoured by a visit was Invercauld. Algernon Borthwick was rather boastful of the exceptional success of the entertainment, which he attributed to a simple device of his own conception. It was nothing more than to provide his guests with an unlimited quantity of weak tea. The difficulty of getting tea according to their taste had, Borthwick told me, been one of the most distressing incidents in an otherwise enjoyable trip. The Persians are accustomed to have a weak decoction of tea within reach throughout the day. In English country houses and at Buckingham Palace they observed that their hostess and her guests took tea at or about the inexorable hour of five o'clock in the afternoon, and took it strong. If the Shah or any of his suite rang and asked for tea at earlier or later hours there was a certain sense of commotion, and when at last the beverage was produced it was hatefully strong. At Invercauld the watchful care of the host provided weak tea ever on tap, and the happiest results ensued.

### XIII.

#### MEMORIES.

Pope Hennessy, in succession Governor of several colonies, practically settled the Irish question in a particular district that came under his control. Home on leave from gubernatorial duties in the Mauritius, he bought a fine estate in County Cork. There were 17,000 acres, for which he gave 15,000*l*. He told

me that as soon as he came into possession he opened amicable intercourse with his tenants. He ascertained that here, as in other parts of Ireland, they were only too ready to become their own landlords if the transfer of property could be effected on favourable terms. With a big estate, bought at something less than 1*l.* an acre, Sir John was in a splendid position to treat, and he conducted the transaction with characteristic ability. To-day every man on his estate is his own landlord, thoroughly satisfied with his bargain, while the owner got back the whole of his purchase-money, and was left in possession of the freehold of a lordly castle and eight hundred acres of rich land.

Here is the Irish question in a nutshell, where, years after, it was found by George Wyndham, who, as Chief Secretary for Ireland, added to the Statute Book an Act encouraging the practice of peasant holdings. It is not the least of the triumphs of a busy life that John Pope Hennessy should have happily solved the perennial problem.

#### FROM MY DIARY.

*October 11, 1888.*—At dinner last night I took down an American lady, a neighbour and companion of Mr. Chamberlain's bride, Miss Endicott. I asked what she was like, and the faithful friend answered 'Charming. She has fair hair and a delicious pink and white complexion, a beautiful figure full of grace, a low, soft voice, and to crown all, she dresses perfectly. She is quite a type of the sweet, demure Puritan maiden, and, apart from her face, which is attractive if not very pretty, she has an air of refined distinction which would mark her out in any crowded room. She was very carefully brought up, Mr. and Mrs. Endicott being extremely particular people. Mary has quiet, demure ways, never going in for what Washington girls call "a frolic" at supper-parties. After a ball—and I met her at several—she would always leave early. I was in Washington a few days before Mr. Chamberlain, and, knowing that I often visited London, she asked all sorts of questions about him. I left Washington before he appeared on the scene. I heard that he met her at a dance almost immediately on his arrival. It was love at first sight. He devoted himself to her, would hardly dance with anyone else, and followed her wherever she went.'



*October 30.*—On the stroke of seven o'clock a chill October morning, looking down on Regent's Park, beheld a strange sight. It was nothing less than Sir Charles Warren, Commissioner of the Police, chased by bloodhounds from cover to cover, and not a policeman in sight. A gentleman who was present tells me the agility with which Sir Charles covered the ground as the hounds approached within measurable distance was more than could have been expected from his age and his official responsibility.

The little entertainment took place in conjunction with a Yorkshire gentleman, who is the happy possessor of a pair of famous bloodhounds. Sir Charles, anxious to test for himself the possibility of the dogs rendering service in connexion with the Whitechapel murders, made an appointment in Regent's Park, and, anxious to obtain the fullest personal information on the subject, he made believe that he (Sir Charles) was the murderer. Assuming a guilty air, he swiftly made off across the Park. After he had got a fair start the hounds were placed on the scent, and in two cases led straight up to the place where the agitated head of the Metropolitan Police was hiding.

*December 15.*—The further parting of Hartington and Gladstone effected during the past fortnight lends fresh interest to a little race between these eminent men run at the Reform Club. Early last year a movement was started to endow the picture-gallery of the club with a portrait of Hartington. After the enterprise was well floated, a proposal was made that Gladstone's portrait should also be added. The scheme went off with a tremendous rush, subscriptions rapidly advancing towards the position attained by the Hartington portrait. This had the effect of leading to a spurt on the part of the Dissentient Liberals, and whenever the Gladstone subscription forged ahead the Hartington list was sure to be filled up. Hartington has throughout maintained the lead, though not by more than a head. To-day I hear the numbers stand—Hartington, 4241.; Gladstone, 4117.

*December 24.*—The question of Henry Stanley's nationality is once more raised. When the great explorer first came into prominence he was naturally taken for an American, an assumption he was at no pains to controvert. After a while some Welshman with a long memory claimed him as a compatriot.

Stanley was at the outset led into the indiscretion of hotly denying this assertion. After a while the controversy dropped, leaving undisturbed in the minds of Welshmen a conviction that the discoverer of Livingstone belonged to the Principality.

The subject being a curiously sore one with Stanley, I never heard it alluded to in his presence, but those who are intimately acquainted with him will know that his tongue bewrayed him. Addressing a public meeting, he speaks in deliberate manner with an American accent. In private company, talking at his ease with familiar friends, he inevitably lapses into the peculiar rapid high intonation peculiar to one of Welsh birth. This is more curious as he left Wales when a mere boy, and spent his time up to full manhood in the United States.

*January 22, 1889.*—Pellegrini died last night quietly, apparently without pain. It is sad to find so valuable a life cut off thus early. We had nothing before like his contributions to 'Vanity Fair,' and have had nothing since. The mingling of caricature with portraiture and the artistic merit of his work form a unique combination. This was what Pellegrini could do best. As often happens, he hankered after something else he believed he could do better. He wanted to be a painter in oils, and at one time abandoned his connexion with 'Vanity Fair' in order to push his fortune with the picture-galleries. He came back disappointed.

A thorough Italian, he bore his transplanting to our northern clime with wondrous success. He spoke the language admirably, with just sufficient accent to make his talk distinctive. Many have tried to imitate the inflexion of his never-failing 'My fellow,' with which he comically interlarded his conversation. No one except Toole could quite catch it. A hearty, kindly, light-spirited man, he will be missed from many familiar haunts.

Talking about him this afternoon, some one said: 'When Pellegrini reaches the gates of Heaven he is sure to hail St. Peter as "My fellow."'

He has not of late been seen in the Lobby of the House of Commons, for several sessions his principal studio. He was as regular in attendance as one of the doorkeepers. Anybody observing his movements could tell to a certainty who would presently turn up in the pages of 'Vanity Fair,' skilfully caricatured by 'Ape.' Having once selected his subject,

Pellegrini treated him precisely as if he were a lay figure. He made no notes, thumbnail, or otherwise. His man being in the Lobby engaged in conversation with another member, he slowly walked round him, scanning his features, his dress, his pose, the size of his feet, and the hang of his arms. He made no idle pretence about the matter. He was there to do his business, and he did it, with a thoroughness that made all his sketches a success.

It was pretty to watch him, sometimes prettier to observe the manœuvres of 'the subject.' If any member whom Pellegrini had taken in hand for the week's sketch failed to discover the fact himself, other members were ready enough to bring him the news. All the while he was lightly laughing and talking with a friend, he was furtively watching the plump little Italian slowly circling round him, making mental notes of his inches. The desperate effort to appear unconscious of what was going on gave an added touch to the familiar comedy.

*February 12.*—Dined in the hall of Middle Temple. Being Grand Night, there was the wonted crowd of bar and student diners. The fun did not begin till dinner was over and the Benchers had retired. It took a little time for the champagne to circulate and the smoke to rise from cigar and cigarette. Once good spirits made a start they proceeded with startling velocity. Just below the dais is the table of the Ancients. The Ancients are the eight oldest barristers in hall not having taken silk. They get a better dinner—soup, as well as fish, brown bread, toasted cheese, and more wine. I mean they add these luxuries to the ordinary dinner, paying only the regulation price of two shillings.

The first thing the young barristers did was to chair the Captain of the Ancients' table. They bore him aloft, a perilous elevation, round the hall. It was flattering, but risky. It turned out that one of them could play the bagpipes, and had brought that instrument of torture with him. Headed by the musician, a long procession, brimful of patriotism and champagne, marched round and round the hall, a sight to see and to remember. Out came the Benchers from their wine room. Amongst them Sir James Hannen (who is Reader for the year) and Mr. Justice Day, who, united on the Bench in the Court of the Parnell Commission, were not separated at the festive board.

They both made speeches. Forty years ago, on this very anniversary, Day told his young friends he had himself changed the student's for the barrister's robe. The good omen was promptly accepted and loudly cheered. They would have cheered anybody. Indeed, cheering was not merely the order of the day, but of the night. When a couple of swords were laid on the ground in the position of the mark on old Dresden china and danced round by an enthusiastic and athletic barrister, the applause grew tumultuous. It seemed as if the Lord of Misrule had come back to the Temple.

*24th February.*—A member of the House of Commons, who has been touring in the South of France, brings back an uncanny story which has in it the plot of a novel. Straying into a criminal court he chanced to hear it. Some time ago the wife of a wine merchant living in a large town in the Gironde was found dead in bed. A letter by her side explained the circumstance of her death. She had, she said, taken poison, being tired of life. She had been 'unfaithful to the best of husbands, and there was nothing for it but to die.' So she had destroyed herself, leaving a message of passionate affection for the bereaved husband.

The tragedy created a profound sensation in the town, where both husband and wife were well known. Everyone was surprised at the confession and its result, Madame being the mother of a family, a devout woman, highly respected and esteemed by all who knew her. The loss was all the greater for the husband, who was overwhelmed with sympathy. The wife was buried, the husband's distress not being in any appreciable degree modified by the circumstance that a large amount of *rentes* forming her *dot* came into his hands. At the end of a year he had so far recovered from the blow as to contemplate a fresh marriage with a young widow who would bring another *dot*. All was ready for the wedding when it was interrupted by an untoward circumstance, namely, the arrest of the intended bridegroom on the charge of murdering his first wife.

The weird story came out in court from the lips of the *bonne* who had nursed Madame's three children, and was in her service at the time of her death. On the night of the tragedy, she, entering the room, saw Monsieur in the act of mesmerising his wife. Attracted by a vague fear, she listened at the door, heard the husband dictate to the wife the letter found by her bedside, and heard him command her to take poison, which he had prepared.

The *bonne* kept silence till her tongue was loosened by the fresh outrage upon her dead mistress contemplated by the new marriage.

Many Happy Returns of the Day.

38, Berkeley Square, W.

March 22, '89.

My dear Mr. Lucy,—You have, alas! fixed for your dinner a day of private fasting and humiliation to me.

You don't understand that May 7 is a domestic tragedy, the *mise en scène* of which is the bosom of my family. I should never be allowed to dine out on that day.

On that melancholy anniversary I scrape myself with a potsherd, and decorate my few remaining hairs with ashes. Nor do I take meat or drink or repose. In short, it is my birthday.

Surely your last 'Observer' article is one of the best?

Yours sincerely,

ROSEBERRY.

3rd April.—When a few years ago I met in New York Ericsson (whose death is just reported), he was past eighty. Like another great inventor nearer home—Isaac Holden, of Bradford—he did not look anything like his age. He was a Swede by birth, and, except that he had the usual complement of two arms, looked something like Captain Cuttle in his Sunday clothes. He always wore a frock coat, made, I should fancy, about the Exhibition Year; a buff waistcoat, probably first donned on a morning in the year 1826 when he set out on the top of a coach to try the 'Novelty' against Stephenson's 'Rocket'; a loosely tied handkerchief round his neck, and a pair of generously designed trousers. Short and stout, with weather-beaten face, his hands betokened his birth in the miner's cottage in far-off Sweden. He left his native country when a boy.

4th April.—An example of the remarkable change that has come over Bradlaugh's position in the House of Commons since the days when a majority of members used to assist in kicking him down stairs was forthcoming at question-time to-day. Among the many absentees were Lord Charles Beresford and Colonel Mark Lockwood, who, having notices of motion on the paper, placed them in the hands of the member for Northampton. The House laughed to hear Bradlaugh rising, 'on behalf of Lord Charles Beresford,' to give notice of his intention on that day

month to move a resolution on the organisation of the Navy. Bradlaugh has been getting on for some time, and is now rather a favourite with the Conservatives than otherwise.

George Grossmith never had reason to regret the bold severance of his connexion with the Savoy Theatre. What troubled him most in his temporary exile from London, touring in the provinces, was the necessary separation between himself and his beloved steam-engine. He once told me that if fate had not led him into the theatrical world he would certainly have been an engine-driver. He had a perfect passion for anything connected with a steam-engine. To the occasional mystification of neighbours and the not infrequent disturbance of domestic arrangements, he kept one on the premises. On the basement floor of his house he laid down a set of rails, along which, after much spluttering and groaning on the part of the engine, and considerable trembling on the part of the premises, he managed to make a journey of a few yards at a pace that sometimes reached the maximum of four miles an hour.

To see Gee-Gee in a workman's cap and blouse, smelling horribly of oil, as he pottered about his steam-engine, was to discover a popular character in a new and perhaps unexpected light.

## THE GRIP OF LIFE.<sup>1</sup>

BY AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE.

### BOOK II.

#### CHAPTER II.

##### TRIAL OF A GIFT HORSE.

IN nothing does life abroad vary more from that of our lazy isles than in its early hours. Sir Ughtred's first night at Overbecq was one of restlessness, and daybreak found him hopelessly wide awake. He lay languidly enough at first, watching the shafts of light steal along the stone walls of his room; listening vaguely to the interwoven music of singing birds, punctuated by the sharp chirp of sparrows, and now and again gravely marked by the voice of rooks—like to dark tones on a merry canvas.

The great walls of the castle were too thick to admit of any inner household sounds penetrating to him; but the stir of humanity without soon added itself to the nature chorus. There was the pulsing jet of pumped water, the clash of buckets from the stable quarters; interchange of calls between the apparently large *personnel* of the horse establishment; and presently, to the guest's astonishment, the unmistakable trumpet blast of his host's shout ringing out in a repeated order, of which he could only catch the words '*Faites seller!*'

So Comte Annibal was about to ride forth in the morning freshness? The thought stimulated Ughtred to a similar resolve. Why not try the paces of that much-belauded filly of Comte de Braye's breeding, which was to replace his pretty Bess?

As he sprang out of bed, some church bell, solemn as a call from the past, rang out the five strokes of the hour; and immediately afterwards a lesser bell began to chime as for a service. Doubtless there was Mass in that chapel where the light looked in through the wonderful stained-glass that the Comtesse Aglaé had once described . . . 'Such browns, such blues!'

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1912, by A. and E. Castle, in the United States of America.



The young man hurried over his dressing. The air that came in through the wide-open casement was charged with a little mist, tart of the unripened hour. The sluggish breath of the moat was in it, as ever; but there was sweetness from the hayfield, and over all a homely yet distinctly foreign tang—odours of wood-smoke and of fresh roasting coffee.

Through the high shaft of his window he had glimpses of a dew-besprinkled, pearly, vapour-hung world; the poplar trees glistened silver-like; and between parting white clouds there were lakes of exquisite pale blue. He heard the clink of hoofs as, with daintily picked tread, some prince of the stalls was led forth; and his pulses stirred to a purely physical sense of pleasure, grateful to one who had spent a night wrestling with troublous problems of the spirit. He ran down the stone stairs with almost boyish keenness and out into the open.

The massive hall-door had been set wide, and two sturdy Flemish wenches, with blue dusters tied over their sandy heads, turned to stare open-mouthed at the English gentleman as he hurried along. He halted a second to ask the way to the stables, and one of the damsels obligingly accompanied him as far as the little bridge that spanned the moat: for the pompous modern buildings erected by the horse-loving present owner of Overbecq stood necessarily without its mediæval precincts.

*'A la bonne heure!'* cried the Comte.

He was standing in the middle of the stable-yard, legs wide apart, surveying the last touches to the equipment of his mount, a rakish-looking powerful chestnut. His countenance was shining with a morning radiance. As he bore down upon his guest, with loud greeting, he brought back to Ughtred's mind that line in which Swinburne sets a hero of old alive again in this prosaic world:

Anteus, great of hand, an iron bulk. . . .

*'A la bonne heure!'* he repeated. *'That is what I like—the cold tub, the morning ride! It is that that makes you the man! Hein, what a morning for a gallop! Joseph!—Marcelin! Saddle me, quick, Blueberry.—That's the filly, you know,'* turning back to his guest; *'you shall give me news of her!'* He caught the reins from the groom, who was still busy with the chestnut. *'Hearest thou, Marcelin? and quick is the word!'*

And even as he spoke, with an almost incredible activity

for one so heavily built, he swung himself into the saddle. The strength of great muscles replaced the spring of younger manhood. The horse plunged, then reared, but the Comte sat smiling while one foot still sought the stirrup—only the grip of the mighty fist testifying to a struggle.

'How do you like this beast here?' he cried, in his unhesitating foreign idiom. 'Irish, this one—Brian Boru!'

The stone building that enclosed the square on three sides gave back his cheerful resonance. Ughtred laughed back from a sheer, unreasoned exhilaration of spirit. But the next moment his pure joy of the morning was dashed: Solange, in a short holland riding-skirt and a loose coat, came leaping into the yard, calling out, in tones that rivalled her uncle's, as far as youthful clarity and a musical woman's pitch would allow:

'So, that is how I am treated! Ha! what treachery! Going out riding without me, *vilain oncle*? Ah, *mais non*!—Joseph, saddle Miss—I may have Miss, I suppose? Don't pull your lip: I will have Miss!—Joseph, saddle Miss!'

She stood a moment, imperious, yet smiling; enforced her order by a stamp of the foot; and then turned to look the Englishman full in the eyes, taunting.

'I thought in your country that people slept till ten o'clock!'

'But I am not in my country,' answered Ughtred coldly.

Yet he had, grudgingly, to admit that she was good to look upon in this morning hour; a vision of youth and vitality. The breezy freshness of the day itself seemed to emanate from her. Sunshine lay in the unruly splendour of her hair.

'Listen to her!' laughed Comte Annibal. His eye rested proudly on his niece; and then, for one searching second, upon Ughtred. And this latter could have stamped his foot in his turn, to feel the scarlet rising of the blood that might lead to so far-fetched, so impossible, a misconception.

'I bet,' cried Solange, suddenly, 'that you have not even had a cup of coffee, sir.'

Her English was quite unhesitating. But, like her uncle, she had odd foreign turns of the tongue, among which the substitution, natural enough, of the formal 'sir,' for the polite 'monsieur.'

'Wait a minute,' she cried; and, before the young man could answer, sprang across the yard with the untrammelled action of a child. She halted at the closed door of what was evidently the dwelling-place of one of the stable attendants, and beat upon it with her fists.

'Hé, mère Nicole, open at once!'

'How?' said the Comte. He had begun to walk his restless chestnut slowly round the yard, and brought him close to his guest, to look down, warning. 'Did you think of going out on the empty stomach? That is a very bad thing, my young friend. It ruins the nerves. We want no more accidents.'

The green door had engulfed Solange's alert figure. Presently she emerged, carrying between both bare hands what seemed a small pudding-bowl, filled with steaming coffee and milk. To free her hands she had stuck gloves and whip into her scarlet leather belt, and a fold of the buff riding-habit was kilted up in the same manner. She moved with a long step, careless of a generous display of booted leg.

Ughtred was minded of some young huntress of Diana's train. Crown that bright head with ivy, fling a panther's skin about those free limbs, tie sandals upon those arching feet—then see her, eager-eyed, relentless, leap after the flying doe: a creature of the woods, unashamed, as cruel as Nature itself, as tireless, as joyful!

His glance full upon her, he brooded upon his own thought. Quite close to him she halted and lifted up the bowl as if she would have held it to his lips; her mouth parted upon white teeth, with her air of exultant breathlessness.

The young man took a step back, and hastily accepted the offering. His hand and hers inevitably met.

'That's it. *C'est ça, buvez-moi cela,*' cried Count Annibal, in that jovial idiom that insists upon a share of another's most personal action. And, indeed, as Ughtred, not knowing what else to do, gulped down the beverage with utmost speed, it was quite clear that his host it was who took most pleasure in the performance: he sat, beaming down on the young pair, from the height of his fidgeting horse.

'Hein! the good little housewife that she will make!' he commented.

Ughtred felt strangely embarrassed, and angry with himself for being so. He quite recognised the girl's kindly thought and prompt ministration; he could not but admit to himself that the steaming bowlful was comforting. But, in some sensitive, unreasonable fibre of his being, he resented her familiarity, the closeness of her approach, the touch of her fingers.

'I am extremely obliged,' he was beginning in his prim manner, when she snatched the empty bowl from his hand and ran with it back to its owner.

It was not until they were halfway down one of the long poplar alleys—he himself mounted upon a steed of sufficient capriciousness to arouse all his own mettle—that his ill-humour evaporated.

'*A la bonne heure!*' the Comte had said. It was indeed a good hour. Even the presence of Solange, triumphant upon the requisitioned Miss, constantly ahead of them, with nothing but laughter for her uncle's objurgations, could not destroy the sense of renewed exhilaration.

Ughtred noticed that the girl scarcely used heel or whip in her relations with her horse, but that she would start it at the desired pace with short, low cries.

'Valkyrie notes,' he told himself again.

Some twenty minutes' ride brought them up to a stretch of oak-wood where the Count had laid down a mile of tan ride. And here they indulged in a racing gallop. The Comte's weight was bound to tell in any extended effort, even on the most powerful horse, and soon Ughtred and Solange found themselves neck to neck. The young man became possessed of an unreasonable desire to win. The fresh breeze whistled in their ears: the drum of the flying hoofs rang a gay rhythm of haste. Two or three times Solange uttered her wild call. The desire to conquer, he suddenly knew, was the desire to conquer her.

Suddenly she shot by him, looking back over her shoulder with a laugh. He never knew whether he then unconsciously spurred the filly, or whether her own hot blood resented being outdistanced; but it was then as if she put forth wings. Before the plains, their goal, were reached again, he had left Miss and her rider many lengths behind.

He pulled up to let her draw level. She came up at hurtling speed, sending the tan flying on every side. To his surprise there was no sign of annoyance, whether anger or sullenness, on her face. Her eyes shone on him approvingly. Her lips were smiling.

'Ah, that was good,' she said, 'wasn't it?' She drew rein with a peremptoriness that made the irascible Miss plunge again. 'She goes well, Blueberry!'

It was the first time, he thought, that he had seen her smile

without the twist of the lip that pointed to jeer, mockery or contempt; and he was surprised to find what a childlike expression came over her face.

Unconsciously he smiled back at her. She did not mind being beaten. Hoyden she might be; but she had the masculine quality, could be a good comrade.

'Better let them breathe a little, till uncle comes up,' she proceeded confidentially. Then pointing with her whip: 'Do you see that house down there? That is Kleenebecq; our cousin Stanislas lives there. He is a Braye-Flesselles. One day he will have Overbecq—if uncle has no children. He will come over on a visit one of these fine mornings. We hate him,' she added, succinctly. 'At least, we two, uncle and I.'

'Indeed?' said Ughtred. His eye had wandered, uninterestedly, to the distant blue roofs, just visible in a fold of the plain. But he looked back again now with a more particular glance. 'We' only meant 'my uncle and I.' The Countess Aglaé, then, did not share in the dislike so plainly avowed. Perhaps she liked the future heir—a young man, too, it seemed; for Solange was proceeding:

'They wanted me to marry him. I said: *Merci!* There was no use his waiting for that! So he married some one else last year. I do hope they'll have no *marmots!*'

'I beg your pardon?' he asked, starting from his abstraction.

'*Marmots*—babies—what you call brats,' she explained, with a shade of impatience. Then she added, with laborious politeness of expression, 'because that would annoy uncle very much.'

On this, 'uncle' himself arrived upon the scene at a steady canter. And as the sun was already waxing hot, it was agreed to take another round through the wood, at a more reasonable pace, and then to turn homewards.

As they finally left the welcome shade of oak boughs for the powdery stretch of the road that divided them from the castle, Ughtred saw, with an inexplicable sinking of the heart, the great pile of buildings lying before him. The mist from the sleeping waters hung about the walls of Overbecq like a shimmering veil. It seemed to him a place spun round with dreams, lying under an unwholesome spell; and he thought, with a kind of horror, of riding back into it from the fresh innocence and freedom of the morning. Even the knowledge that his hostess

was probably awaiting their return to greet them with that smile of hidden meaning, and those unfathomable eyes, added a poignancy to the kind of mental shudder that came over him.

As they alighted in the *cour d'honneur*, Comte Annibal, after ascertaining that Blueberry had given complete satisfaction as to paces and manners, thereupon with some formality declared her the property of his guest.

Scarlet in the face, Ughtred attempted a disclaimer, which fell silent before the Comte's determination. He saw that to insist by even one other word would be to offend; and he therefore endeavoured to infuse due enthusiasm into his thanks. But within him there was a repugnance as unfounded, it seemed, as the shiver of his heart a minute ago at the sight of Overbecq. Why should it be so sovereignly unpleasant to him to receive a gift from Comtesse Aglaé's husband? From one rich man to another rich man, it could convey no possible hint of tactlessness. Yet, as the shadow of the great hall closed upon him after the sunshine, Ughtred felt burdened to depression.

### CHAPTER III.

#### M. VAUCELIN AND THE NIKÉ OF SAMOTHRAKI.

'To resume, dear John Gordon, my unfinished letter: I had more than a mind to destroy it, but after all I think it must go to you.

'You have so long been the confidant of my lonely thought, that it seems almost a necessity to open my heart to you, were it only for the discrimination of the tangles that have developed in my existence.

'I cannot deny to myself, or to you, that I am troubled. It is a trouble that increases as the days go by. I have it borne in on me that I was meant to live my life apart: that I have done violence to my own nature by admitting the society of others to influence it. What is more, I may very well find myself here in an absurdly false position. I ought never to have come to Overbecq. I ought even to make a pretext for departure. But you shall judge for yourself. After all, you see, I count upon your patience and friendship.

'To-day the celebrated Monsieur Vaucelin arrived. An amiable, rotund gentleman, with clipped grey beard, twinkling eye, and a charming French manner in which courtesy and

*bonhomie* are blended. He has a choice precision of speech—and about as much Hellenic attainments, my dear master, as Thomas, your black cat. He speaks of Homer as confidently as of Voltaire: "*Homère—ce gaillard, quel génie!*" he said to me. But he has a pretty taste in art and a patter of gods and goddesses and heroes upon his tongue. I heard him informing the Comtesse that I was like Antinous of the fair hair. A little later he expatiated to me upon Mademoiselle Solange, for whom he has an admiration as complete as my own antipathy. "Look at her, my young friend—look at her! Ah, are you lucky to be young, by the side of that youthfulness! No? But have you considered her? *Non—mais!*" He gazed into my blank eyes with good-humoured impatience and tapped me on the chest. "Cast your eyes upon that, now—one look will suffice—and then tell me. You know what it is? You recognise? What, you a Greek scholar! *Mais cela saute aux yeux, monsieur!* You know your Louvre, don't you?—*Ma belle enfant!*" He raised his rather thin voice to apostrophise the young lady. "Remain as you are—don't budge! Now . . . now?" Again he tapped me and waved his hand like a showman. I must explain that we were strolling in the garden after dinner (the meal is early here) and it was still between the lights. Solange, always a restless personality, had climbed upon the end of the broad stone parapet at the corner of the bridge, for the purpose of exasperating the great liver-coloured Danes (to which she nightly contributes titbits) to the extreme of tantalisation. The lean beasts were leaping against the parapet with whines and barks while she held aloft the coveted morsel. To tell you the truth, I had turned my eyes away from the spectacle, all my sympathies being with the Danes. But I had to look as bidden.

'There was a hot storm-wind and it blew in gusts—the kind of wind that brings no refreshment, only a sense of agitation with it. As I glanced at the figure on the parapet the gust came. Mademoiselle Solange wore a pale green garment of extremely tenuous texture. You know the fashion of these days, "after the classic." She stood poised on the edge at the angle of the bridge, facing the sunset glow. Her head was thrown back as if to breathe in the hot air that seemed to rush at her straight from the gold.

"Look at her!" cried my Hellenic friend again. There was genuine excitement in his voice. "*Est-ce assez campé!* Look



at those shoulders, my friend, those proportions—the line of throat and bust and hip . . . now, now while the wind is blowing, the way those draperies cling! What—you do not recognise? Is it possible? But it is a *chef-d'œuvre* completed. It is the Niké—the Niké of Samothraki. The greatest of all Greek splendours! Ah!—” he proceeded, stepping forward, as the girl took a flying leap down the green sward, flinging from her upon each side a too-importunate hound, “Victory, Victory herself! See her come—made for triumph. *Ah, mon Dieu!*—” He dropped his high note, and with a sigh half comic, half earnest: “and to think that I have seen my sixty years!”

‘He had a sidelong glance at me upon this ejaculation, that held a world of meaning. “My young friend,” it seemed to say, “you are not so cold as you pretend to be.” It was quite true—I was not cold. The girl arouses in me a warmth of antagonism that would considerably astonish that amiable Frenchman, could he have guessed at it. Those superb proportions, the insolent youth, the challenging womanhood: I resent them to the marrow of my bones. Niké—the comparison had only been too apt; and while I recognised its truth, it was with anger. That divine presentment, the Niké of Samothraki, had always had its shrine in my heart, the more satisfying beauty, perhaps for that very incompleteness that sets imagination at work to conceive a perfection almost beyond conception. But the *chef-d'œuvre achevé* of Monsieur Vaucelin, this passionate, material, defiant young mortal, how far it is from the majestic, passionless goddess! And yet now, the human presentment will for ever overlap the divine image. Never shall I see my little bronze Niké without translating her into this vivid flesh and blood, this pulsing energy of life; without setting upon the beautiful mutilated neck, that head rippling with its crown of copper riotous in the sunset, that face pallid and yet as fiercely instinct with strength as a white flame, with those lips parted upon a smile of triumph, those panting nostrils drinking in the air of battle. Niké—it is a discovery—yes, she is Niké. And what is she setting forth to overcome, with so much pride and certainty? John Gordon, what is the eternal field of strife for such as she? I repeat it: I resent this intrusion! Every particle of spirit within me rises in rebellion. I will have none of her or of what she represents.

‘I saw but little of Comtesse Aglaé yesterday. Only when we

went in, after the usual cigarette stroll, she played for me again. Haydn, dear friend, and odd little twirling things of Scarlatti—a hateful tinkle to my ear! I sat, far away from the piano, in the outer circle. M. Vaucelin and our host talked uninterruptedly over the armour at the other end of the room, the Comte holding a candle to its details and perfections. Solange, who had been pacing with them—her uncle has a passion for that girl: all his thwarted paternal yearning seems to be concentrated upon her, and if he can have his great hand in her hair or on her shoulder, he is content—Solange left his side suddenly and came up to me. She took a chair, after her fashion, embarrassingly close to me, and, leaning still closer, said:

“Do you like this music better than last night's?”

“No, mademoiselle,” I said stolidly, disregarding the tilt of her lip.

“You like Cousin Antony's better,” she pursued. I did not answer. She leaned still nearer. “Do you afflict yourself,” she remarked, with great distinctness; “you will have a music all for yourself—just like the others!”

My eyes opened upon her, as I drew back. They must have conveyed some of the anger that filled my soul; for an answering anger swept over her face—something that was at once a dark shadow and yet a pallor.

“Have you been invited to the Tourelle room?” she went on.

“No, mademoiselle.”

What could I do but reply. To have shown the passion that she had set aflame in me would have been ludicrous self-betrayal. She nodded at me, once or twice.

“Tranquillise yourself,” she said, and there was scorn in the twist of her mouth. “You will be asked. Do not forget to look into the locket, when you are there.”

I moved my chair, with quite involuntary action, still further away from her. Her lips were laughing, but her eyes were fierce. And the Scarlatti minuet went on like the tinkle of a shallow stream over stones, for ever repeated, empty of meaning, maddening.

As the Comte's great voice and his friend's muffled pipe approached the piano, the Comtesse dropped her hands from the keys.

“Brava, brava!” said M. Vaucelin, clapping his soft palms enthusiastically. “How exquisite that is!”

' She smiled at him, and he bowed two or three times, with a chuckle in his throat. He is very formal with her. I do not think he likes her. What, indeed, could she have in common, delicate mystery that she is, with that most banal of beings? "Does not that bring you back to Greece, my young friend?" he pursued, turning to me. "The song of the shepherd on the mountain, or the simple pipes of Pan in the thicket?"

' Across him, her eyes met mine. She was smiling.

' "Is it to-morrow that our cousin of Kleenebecq comes?" interpolated Mademoiselle Solange, as if the pleasant thought had just struck her. Once again it was as if she had flung a stone into quiet water. She had already informed me of her uncle's aversion for his probable heir. It might have accounted perhaps for the thundercloud that instantly descended upon him, but it could not have accounted for the look he cast upon his wife:

' "Ah, you have invited them?"

' His voice was threatening as with a growl of gathering storm. She shrugged her shoulders. For the first time I saw a hardening of those gentle features. Between half-closed lids her eyes flashed a second with the grey of steel; but her voice was quite soft.

' "It had to be done, *mon ami*.—And has he not to introduce his young wife?" she added.

' "Ah, true, the young wife—*Sacrebleu!* I was forgetting. He has married himself lately, *ce lapin-là!*" The Comte turned explanatorily to M. Vaucelin. His angry brow cleared; but even as he spoke it lowered again. He was thinking, no doubt, of the probable result of this *lapin's* alliance.

' I had a moment alone with the Comtesse Aglaé before we parted for the night. Solange remained behind, playfully wrestling with her uncle, after a good-night hug. I lit the Comtesse's candle for her. In spite of half a dozen huge white globed lamps, the hall is always as dim as a church.

' We bade each other good-night with hushed tones. Involuntarily one attunes one's voice, here, to the deep stone-cased silence. The candle she was holding threw its light flickeringly upon her face, for there are strange little currents of air wandering capriciously about these huge spaces. They must spring into life within the walls themselves.

' I thought that she looked weary; and all at once it occurred to me that her face, despite its ethereal air of arrested perfection, its magnolia-white texture, was as the face of one who had

long endured depths of secret suffering. She gave me a faint smile, as if she divined my thought. Different from those enigmatic smiles of distant wisdom, it seemed to admit me near some intimacy of soul—it was sadder than tears. Then she said :

“ We have never had our quiet little quarter of an hour on Parnassus, you and I.” And through those sadly smiling lips came a sigh that seemed to claim still further understanding from me. “ Shall it be to-morrow—after that visit? ”

‘ How can I tell you why I knew, as she spoke, that she hated and dreaded “ that visit ” ? The wind of sympathy, like the grace of God, bloweth where it listeth ; and those two whom it brings into subtle communication with each other know not why or how—unless, indeed, there is a law. But after all the result is the same.

“ You will come to my Tourelle,” she went on. The smile had left her lips, but it had gone into her eyes. “ I have a piano there ; I will play to you, when you have read to me.”

‘ That was how she asked me to her Tourelle. Is it not cursed, dear John Gordon, that the stone flung by that perverse child should have raised a muddy cloud about so simple a plan, about what ought to be the most innocent pleasure for surely two of the most innocent people alive!—But what had Solange de Flodore meant? And if I opened that locket?

‘ Alas! that a few reckless words should have power to disturb relations which might be so serene, so perfect! And yet no man knows, I suppose, the depths of folly that lie within him. I acknowledge (without understanding) that I had a troubled curiosity about that locket, dating from the first day I saw it, and that the name of the dead Antoine always evoked a secret and groundless resentment. And, dear master, the horrible truth forces itself upon me that the mud so successfully stirred up lies in my own nature.

‘ I must try to go to sleep.’

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### COUSIN STANISLAS, HEIR-APPARENT.

THE storm which had brooded upon Overbecq resolved itself, in the small hours of the morning, into fierce downpour, and the

day broke upon hopeless weather. An unrelenting rain wrapt all the plainland. Vapours rose from the moat, charged with the exhalations of the slimy waters. Suffocating veils seemed to fold the castle round and round. The outside air was like that of a fernhouse; within, the walls ran with moisture. There was a darkness that clung to the spirits as well as to the bodily frame.

The Comte was in a decidedly gouty humour. Solange, having been once or twice snubbed by him somewhat unaccountably, sulked, like a child, with out-thrust lip. Madame de Braye, very much the woman of the world in these trying circumstances, kept up an indifferent yet brisk conversation with M. Vaucelin, who on his side had all the tact demanded by the situation.

Ughtred, sensitive as a lute string, suffered not only from external influences but from the colour of others' moods, and could not rouse himself out of a depressed silence. Perhaps, though he did not admit it to himself, he resented his hostess's absent greeting, the fashion in which her inscrutable eyes, to-day, swept over him across the table, as if he had been of no more special account to her than the white-gloved servants in their brisk attendance.

The *déjeuner* could hardly have been said to be a pleasant meal. The Comte only stirred from his taciturnity to grunt a complaint: 'Was it a day for melon? He asked you that!' To swear at the tanned-faced butler for omitting to refill his glass. . . . '*Palsambleu!* was he to perish of drouth!' As he rose with a violent flap of his napkin, he demanded, 'If that sacred visit was still to be expected in this dog's weather?'

'Oh, he will come—trust the Stanislases,' answered Solange with disdainful lip. 'And what we shall do with them, shut up? What a bother it's going to be!' She stretched herself and yawned. The Comte grunted again and slouched from the room, one of the big Danes slouching after him.

'I have had a fire lit in the gallery,' said the Comtesse.

'As for me, I'm going out,' said the girl impatiently.

M. Vaucelin proposed to Ughtred to smoke a cigar in the hall; it was evident that he thought the Englishman was somewhat neglected.

'*Ce cher Annibal!*' he said genially, between his first puffs, 'he is in one of his little wild-boar humours—that happens from time to time.'

Ughtred agreed, with a slight sarcastic smile at the qualification 'little.'

'But what a golden heart!' pursued the amiable Vaucelin; 'and it's sad, all the same, that he has not got *un petit mar-cassin*—what do you call it?—a little wild-boarlet of his own! Between ourselves, my friend, that is what consoles an old bachelor like myself for his loneliness—the uncertainties of marriage, the great uncertainties of marriage—' He had a puffing sigh at this. '*Ce pauvre Annibal!*' And then he added, with a palpably assumed tone of sweetness, 'What a charming woman, the Comtesse, is she not?'

Ughtred's not very pleasant smile became accentuated. Did the dense being believe that such idle words could influence him? The Frenchman, with his sidelong look, regarded his companion and apparently thought he had another erroneous impression to correct:

'Not that I am an advocate of celibacy, my young friend,' he went on, laying his fat, well-kept hand a moment upon the other's arm. 'For certain natures, perhaps; but for very, very few. A happy marriage, sir, especially in youth. . . . Ah, I waited too long, you see! That is fatal. One must marry young. You pick out for yourself some *belle jeunesse* to match your own—some fine brave child to give you the hand through life—that is the ideal.'

He turned up his eyes and sighed again. Ughtred fixed his grave glance distastefully upon him; every word of the good man rang as false in his ears as his encomium on his hostess. 'One would almost imagine,' thought he, 'that the text for this exordium had been inspired beforehand.'

M. Vaucelin's next words added to the undesired and ludicrous suspicion:

'Mademoiselle Solange, now—happy the *gaillard* who will get her! Ah, if I had but your years, my young Greek hero!'

The young hero revolved two or three scathing repudiations in his mind, and finally discarded all comment as undignified.

'When you went to Greece, M. Vaucelin,' he said—and was unconscious how intensely Britannic he appeared at the moment—'did you visit the islands?'

'Sir,' answered the Frenchman, with twinkling eyes, 'I did my *tournée* in the most conscientious manner. I visited Samos, Delos, Naxos, and Paros—I made a very beautiful journey.'

'I am on my way to a similar pilgrimage,' said Ughtred, determined to see nothing humorous in the situation.

'Ah! the beautiful journey you will have!' repeated the easy Hellenist with conviction. Then he paused in his slow tramping, took the cigar from his mouth and laid a plump finger-tip about the middle button of Ughtred's waistcoat. 'But among all the beautiful things you will see, let me tell you,' he said in his *grasseyant* French, 'you will meet with nothing more beautiful than what you will have left there behind you.'

'Indeed!' said Ughtred unencouragingly, and withdrawing from the other's finger. It was eminently displeasing to him to be touched.

'You will ask me what that is,' said the Frenchman, not easily at a loss. 'I answer you—Niké! Our restored Niké, that living object of art and triumph.' His praise ended on a shrill note of enthusiasm.

His small twinkling eyes rested humorously on his companion's face. It was useless, Ughtred felt, to protest against the rôle of bashful lover found out thus thrust upon him, even if he could have done so without an odious appearance of self-conceit. He was extremely glad, however, when this one-sided conversation was ended by the arrival of the couple from Kleenebecq.

The hall became instantly a scene of some vivacity. Stanislas de Braye-Flesselles and his recent bride appeared in the most up-to-date of motor garments, of which being divested, the young man was found to be long and thin and somewhat weedy-looking, with an extreme correctitude of attire and manner.

Ughtred's first impression was the Briton's easy contempt for the foreigner modelled upon the 'sportsman' type. But meeting Comte Stanislas's eye, upon their introduction, a grudging kind of respect sprang up in his soul.

The eyes of the heir-apparent to Overbecq were the only features in which he resembled the head of the race. But, whereas in Count Annibal's case their prominent masterfulness was tempered by a genuinely benevolent outlook on mankind, the regard of the younger scion conveyed nothing but a glacial *morgue*, an almost intolerable consciousness of overruling will. And, as Ughtred felt that, after all, this outrageously over-tailored individual had a personality to be reckoned with, he found himself surveyed with a kindred distrust; with an air of



inquiry amounting to insolence. 'And what do you do here?' the pale cold eyes were asking, even while his own were unconsciously demanding: 'What did you do here?'

What indeed? Uneasy voices were crying in the Englishman's uneasy soul to justify the Comte de Braye's hatred; to justify the tone and the thundercloud with which he had turned last night upon his wife; to justify the innuendo that Solange had conveyed in her 'we two——?'

Stanislas de Braye-Flesselles's Comtesse was small and plump; extremely voluble, aggressively new-married. Later in the day, Annibal de Braye qualified her as *une espèce de pie-grièche qui ne doute de rien*. 'Did you not see her?' he said to Solange, taking her by the elbow; 'she was making her inventory of the place! *Palsambleu*, as I tell thee, making the inventory. Faith, you could almost have heard her thinking . . . It is here that I shall make my boudoir . . . That armour will look better over there . . . I adore Pompadour rose.' He burlesqued the bride's high feminine tones in a stentorian falsetto. 'You see that from here—eh, Vaucelin? The Galerie des Chevaliers dished up à la Pompadour! *Ventre-Saint-Gris!*' His laugh rang out, he had recovered good humour with the departure of the obnoxious couple. 'I feel capable of living to a hundred for the mere pleasure of keeping *beau-sire* Stanislas fasting. Eh, eh, life for life, who shall say I do not outvalue my heir?' He squared himself where he stood and struck his massive chest. 'Deplorable conformation, Stanislas! What you call,' his eye here enlisted Ughtred's attention, 'the breast of the chicken—is it not so, my friend?'

'Disgusting!' said Ughtred, with an emphasis so cutting and unexpected that all eyes turned upon him. He had not noticed young Madame de Braye-Flesselles's tactless appraising of her probable future possessions; all his energies had been taken up in jealous concentration upon the looks and sayings and doings of the lady's husband.

Yet all that Comte Stanislas had said and done was of immaterial moment. But not so what he had looked. Ughtred had intercepted a look, a single glance flung upon the Comtesse Aglaé. It could only be described as one of searing passion: a passion the more offensive, the more singular and impressive, that it seemed to emanate from a kind of icy determination. How had

circumstances warranted such a look from the newly married man to another man's wife, and that man chief of the family? It was out of the turmoil which these thoughts raised in his soul that Ughtred, into a momentary pause, had put the seemingly irrelevant question :

'Are you fond of music, monsieur?'

Comte Stanislas had set down his tea-cup and turned his whole body as he surveyed his interlocutor with his insolent eye.

'Yes, sir,' he had answered, after a perceptible pause, in prim every-day tones. 'I like ancient music, Haydn and Glück, even Scarlatti.'

Ughtred had felt the blood rush in maddening heat to his face. He thought that Comte Stanislas had had a small private smile, as he turned all of a piece back to the slow degustation of his tea. He could imagine what a hateful twist of triumph there would be upon Solange's lips. But, glancing involuntarily at her, he had been amazed and no less discomfited to find an answering scarlet in the girl's face, and to meet in her eyes an unmistakable fire of indignant championship.

The Comtesse herself, however, had gone through the proceedings with that air of suave indifference she had worn all the morning. Ughtred had noticed (since, despite himself he was noticing everything concerning her, and with a miserable intensity) that she kept the bride close to her side, enduring the latter's volubility and perpetual reiteration of the title *ma cousine* with a smiling tolerance that might have passed for pleasure.

That look of Comte Stanislas' had had to cross the wife's countenance before reaching the Comtesse Aglaé. 'How was it possible,' the watcher asked himself, 'that if a man felt for such a woman all such a glance betrayed, he should have joined himself, in the irrevocable closeness of the marriage bonds, to one who was so blatant a contrast?'

The rain was still falling as the visitors departed, but nevertheless the Comte proposed a round of the stables. He was restored to good humour; Ughtred could not help suspecting that it was because of the manner in which his wife had contrived to keep Stanislas at a distance. What would have occurred if he had intercepted the odious fire of his cousin's glance, the young man wondered. Possibly the instant strangling of the heir-apparent.

'Do not forget, Sir Ughtred,' said his hostess at the door, 'that you have promised to come to my Tourelle before dinner.'

Ughtred could not raise his eyes as he murmured an affirmation, for Solange stood at his elbow.

'Comest thou, *petite*?' said the Uncle.

The girl answered uncompromisingly: 'No.' But without taking umbrage Comte Annibal shot a swift glance at his guest, and laughed. And, as the two strode across the bridge together, with the fine spray of the rain against their faces, the big man proceeded to explain his laughter:

'These little girls . . . ! Shy as colts! They are burning to be of the company; and for that reason they fling you a "No," just as your filly will toss her pretty head—no more malice in it. *Hein*, my friend, you can believe me.' His face, shining with the wet, was turned in such guileless good humour upon him that Ughtred, despite his consternation, could find no word. The Comte hastily proceeded, his hand on the latch of the courtyard door: 'But it is not for me to put my big hoof in. You are right, my friend, leave it all in the little paws of my wife. There are things that demand the delicate touch. You'll have your hour in the Tourelle—and no one will ask what you have talked about.'

Every loud note of the laughter that followed this phrase rang against the other's conscience like blows of a hammer. His tongue was paralysed. His very wits stood still before the horror of the misunderstanding and its incomprehensibleness.

In the warm hay-scented gloom of Blueberry's loose box Comte Annibal spoke again, reverting to what seemed, for the moment, the dominating thought:

'She is all that I love, that child! All that lives and moves of my flesh and blood—a real Braye! My poor sister was the type of our race, a splendour! To think that she should die in giving life to that poor little one! The unhappy Flodore, her husband, worshipped her—it was the stroke of death to him also.'

The huge hairy hand, caressing the mare's satin neck, trembled.

The phrase suggested itself to Ughtred's troubled mind: 'I hope that you may see her married to your liking.' But he broke off, stammering, upon the realisation, that instead of conveying his personal detachment in the matter, it might be taken as bearing exactly the opposite meaning.

Comte Annibal gave a short laugh, fraught with some

emotion; struck the filly a hearty slap that made her plunge; and, with what his companion felt was a self-satisfied consciousness of tact, abruptly changed the topic to that of Blueberry's perfections.

Was the niece to be offered to him with the same knockdown generosity as the roan colt? the young man asked himself with considerable anguish. But that abnormal sensitiveness of his kept from his lips the straight and manly word which should, from the very outset, have put an end to the false situation.

## CHAPTER V.

### MUSIC IN THE TOURELLE.

WHEN he found his way up the many winding stairs of the Tourelle, the culminating annoyance of the day had produced in him a mood of depression not far removed from sullenness.

The turret room was a charming octangular apartment, built high up at the corner of the oldest remaining mediæval walls. From the six windows it boasted, there might well be watched a wide expanse of the Brabant champaign. But the dismal evening was shut out by heavy curtains. Only a couple of candelabra shed their pale light against the glow of a wood fire, sunk in so deep a hearth and leaping up so vast a chimney that it seemed to have been kindled merely for the sake of picturesque effect. In the middle of the room stood a semi-grand piano, the only modern piece of furniture.

The Comtesse rose from her Gothic chair at his entrance. She had been writing, at a desk of attractive ancient design and, as she came towards him, held a closed letter in her hand.

Ughtred had no sooner crossed the threshold than the mantle of his peevish humour seemed to fall from him. This was her sanctum; the atmosphere that enfolded him here was her very own. Her eyes gazed upon him through sweetly contracted lids; she was glad of his presence—he felt that, and also that he was glad to be in hers. With a rush as of fragrance, memories of that evening at Crossforth, when she had sat by his couch in the gloaming, came upon him. But he was destined to be flung back upon himself with a shock the more jarring for the self-abandonment of the moment.

She leant across the piano towards him, and then, without

any preamble: 'I have a little service to ask of you,' she said. 'Post this letter in the village for me?'

As she spoke she laid the envelope, face upwards, between them; and he read the superscription. The wonder evoked by her request was instantly lost in a tide of overwhelming anger. The letter was addressed to Comte Stanislas de Braye-Flesselles! The blood was hammering in his temples; and that new personality of his (with which he had already made a disturbing acquaintance) spoke out rudely:

'Have you then no confidential valet, madame—for such errands?'

She looked at him a second; the smile on her lips vanished, but her glance held an almost maternal softness that was yet amused.

'I preferred,' she said then, very gently, 'to have confidence in a friend.'

The blood ebbed back to his heart. He felt himself grow livid. His lips, suddenly cold, seemed hardly able to form the desperate words that rose to them:

'Why are you writing to that man?—What is there between you?'

'He left a letter for me behind him to-day. I am answering it.' And then voice and air lost their delicate mockery. She went on—looking at him, and speaking with an infinite gentleness: 'But are you mad, my poor friend? *N'êtes-vous pas un peu fou?*' The words in French had no sting. They were charged with indulgence.

Ughtred pushed the thick hair back from his forehead with a shaking hand. What had come over him that he had dared upon such insult? And how luminously, how serenely her purity shone out! Had she fulminated in anger or broken into reproach, doubt might have deepened in him. But she was sailing through the dark cloud of his suspicion, moonlike in silver radiance. A change came over her face again: gravity.

'Please take the letter and open it,' she said.

Stammering, he repudiated the idea.

'Please,' she repeated, a note of dignity added to her seriousness.

A second longer he hesitated; then the thought suddenly struck him that he was being deliberately played with; that he would find therein the most banal of communications and have to stand before her covered with confusion—that most pitiable

of fools, the unnecessarily dramatic! Once again he flung the envelope from him.

'You will not?' she said, without departing from her composure; 'well then, I will. It only means the writing of a fresh address.'

She ran her little finger under the flap; drew forth a blank sheet of paper and from it shook fragments of what had been a closely written letter torn into small shreds.

'Oh, forgive me!' cried Ughtred. He could not meet her eyes. He had dreaded to know himself a fool before her; now he appeared to himself infinitely worse: presumptuous, unchivalrous. And yet there was an exultation in his heart he had never known before.

She began placidly to gather the pieces of paper again and to restore them to the blank sheet. This task accomplished, still leaning towards him across the piano, she began to speak again; and into her voice there came a veiling as of tears held back. And there was now and again a little halt. Had she openly lamented, her listener would have been less moved.

'It is not always easy—you noticed, I daresay, that my husband——' She broke off, the unfinished sentence was extraordinarily eloquent. 'If it had been anyone else but his heir, the business could be soon settled; but . . . how can I let my husband fight his heir? An impossibility, is it not, my friend? So the situation has complicated itself. And Annibal,——' again she paused. 'I had hoped his madness of Stanislas would pass. It is indeed a madness. I was so glad to hear of his marriage.'

'Oh, please don't say any more!' Miserably Ughtred stood, still with downcast eyes. 'I am ashamed,' he went on, in a voice so low as hardly to be audible; then, all at once, moved by some unexplained impulse, he opened his gaze deep upon hers.

'Then,' she went on, after a pause, as she moved away from the piano to fling the torn envelope into the hearth, 'you will post my letter. To-morrow morning will do,' she added, resuming her everyday tone. She sat down, re-wrote the direction, and then, turning in her chair, held out the letter towards him. Slowly he came round to her. She continued speaking as if the situation were the most ordinary in the world.

'Put it in your pocket. That is right. And now, where is your manuscript? Oh, you have not forgotten? You promised

to read me some of your odes! Well then, if you will not read to me, it shall not be said that I too broke my word. I will play to you. Sit there by the fire. No, I will not have you nearer: sit by the fire . . . while I play.'

He was as incapable of resisting her will as one thoroughly hypnotised. He sat where she bade him; and because he felt that she wished it turned his gaze away from her to watch unseeingly the flames that leaped and fell about the logs.

She struck a chord, paused, then the music rushed upon his senses. It was as if the turmoil, the anguished yearning of his soul, had found voice at last. The tide of storm-driven waters, the crash of wild winds through the forest, all the forces of conflict, stress, haste, passion, seemed to be concentrated in these gusts of sound, and the darker energies of his nature let loose as in a night of tempest. He was torn by desires, pressed by a frenzied hurry, battling with unchained elements; his soul was cleaving space in search of hers. It was torture, yet it was joy. Before the last chords were struck he found himself, he scarcely knew how, standing beside her.

'Is that for me?' he panted. 'Is that my music?'

She did not look up. With the secret smile upon her lip, she gazed down at the notes. But she too was breathless from the storm of the music she had created.

Only for that smile he would have been perilously near flinging himself on his knees beside her—perilously near clasping her in his arms. Dreamily she said:

'I have been playing this piece to myself for two days. You see'—she struck a note so gently that it was a sigh, 'if both the great doors on my turret stairs are closed even you cannot hear me, though you are in the corridor below. That is the use of a *Tourelle*.'

He felt as if a hand, as soft as it was firm, had been laid on his lips, ready to give words to the uttermost and most exquisite folly.

'What then is . . . my music called?'

'*In der Nacht*' she said. And, as she spoke, she looked him a moment full in the eyes. Then she rose.

He knew he was dismissed, and, without a word, left the room. As he went down the narrow stone stairs there was a giddiness upon him.

(*To be continued.*)



## ANNUITIES AND THEIR USES.

### SOME INTERESTING EXAMPLES—INCOMES INCREASED FOURFOLD.

ALTHOUGH a good deal has been written of late about Annuities, there is still a great lack of information on the part of many regarding this very convenient and useful form of investment. For example, Annuities are associated in the minds of most people with old age, and while many are ready to admit that a purchase of an Annuity is a very excellent thing in the evening of life, it occurs to comparatively few that the easiest way to secure a good Annuity for one's declining years is to begin earlier in life by paying the purchase money in comparatively small annual instalments.

### MANY CONTINGENCIES.

The contingencies that may be provided for by Annuities, and the methods of making these provisions are almost innumerable, and yet are very simple and easily understood. Perhaps the clearest way of illustrating some of them is to give a few examples selected from the registers of one of the great companies making a speciality of this class of business.

Example, a retired solicitor with impaired health, aged 74, deposits £6000, and receives an Annuity of £1000 payable for life, thus increasing his income fourfold.

### JOINT LIFE AND SURVIVORSHIP.

Three sisters, aged 62, 69, and 72, deposit £1500, and receive a joint Annuity of £135, payable half-yearly, until the death of the last survivor.

A husband, aged 75, and wife, aged 70, whose total worldly possessions amount to £2000, on which they were realising £80 per annum, invested the whole in an Annuity, realising at once a joint income of £239, paid half-yearly during their joint lives, to be reduced to £179 after the death of the first.

### SAVING UP FOR A RAINY DAY.

All of these examples refer to immediate Annuities. We will now give examples of deferred Annuities :—

A young man, 26, by depositing £13 2s. yearly, secures an income of £100 a year, beginning at 60.

U O P M

## ANNUITIES AND THEIR USES.

A nurse, aged 80, pays £10 5s. yearly, and secures an Old Age Pension of £50, beginning at 60.

A man, aged 28, feeling sure of his present income for at least ten years, pays ten annual payments of £75 each, and secures £200 a year, beginning at age 65.

Prince A, aged 31, deposited £6814 for a deferred Annuity of £600 per annum, to begin at age 41.

### WIFE AND CHILDREN.

The examples provide for the purchaser only. Here are a few providing for the wife and children or for parents.

A. J., aged 25, secures £100 a year for his mother, aged 65, should she survive him, at the small annual cost of £7 8s.

J. F., aged 36, wife 34, having two children, secures an income of £200 a year for his wife should she survive him. So that the children may not be left unprovided for should the wife also die, the Company guarantees to keep up the Annuity until at least twenty annual instalments have been paid. The youngest child will therefore be of age before the payments have ceased, while, on the other hand, they never cease during the wife's life, though she may attain a very advanced age. This seems a better provision than leaving a capital sum, which may be lost through poor investments. The annual cost in this case is £78 12s., which, it must be admitted, seems a very moderate sum for such an ample provision.

These examples illustrate only a few of the contingencies of life that may be provided for more conveniently and more safely by Annuities than in any other manner. They are all taken from the records of one of the strongest financial institutions in the British Empire, the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada, whose head office for the United Kingdom is 56 Canada House, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C. Mr. J. F. Junkin, the manager, explains that it would require a large volume to deal adequately with all the different kinds of Annuities and Old Age Pensions granted by the Sun of Canada, so that inquirers should mention their age and give some idea of the nature of the provision they wish to make. All such communications will be treated as confidential. While all correspondence will receive prompt and courteous attention, and will not be regarded as committing the correspondent to anything, it is requested that no one will, merely through curiosity, make inquiries which necessarily involve intricate calculations.

